August 1978
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...MOREOVER...

Those of you who wait breathlessly for each month's *HM* Chain Mail column must by now be aware that our correspondents are at least as kinky as letter writers to *Fetish Times, Soldier of Fortune* magazine, or any other distinguished journal of opinion. S/f-fantasy attracts cranks the way a head-on collision draws innocent bystanders.

But "good taste" is our slogan & our program. In "Heilman," chapter three within, we have instructed art director John Workman to reposition the speech balloons, lest our readers' eyes be scandalized by the graphic renderings of the organs of generation. Corben has been warned to keep the airborne oral-genitalism to a minimum. We resolve never again to expose a mammary flasher without immediately punishing her duly via bug-eyed bozos from nickel-plated Frisbees with radioactive phallic symbols. We're taking what the exprez termed the high road.

Because, more in sorrow than in anger, Moms from every state and colony have written to tell us they believe that their offspring's recurrent orgies of onanism (the symptoms are all too obvious in an adolescent—moodiness, lack of ambition) have been caused and effected by their exposure to the sight of primary and secondary sexual characteristics on our pages. They urge us, as *soi-disant* eco-idealists, to end all pollution, including the self-sort. Moms, we're with you!

And, in keeping with this born again philosophy, we will present next month, an illustrated Harlan Ellison, the first Jay Kinney in a long time, & fiction by Richard Lupoff.

Illustration by Vern

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: Published monthly by HM Communications, Inc., 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. $18.00 paid annual subscription, $26.00 paid two-year subscription, and $33.00 paid three-year subscription in territorial U.S. Additional $2.50 for Canada, Mexico, and foreign. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

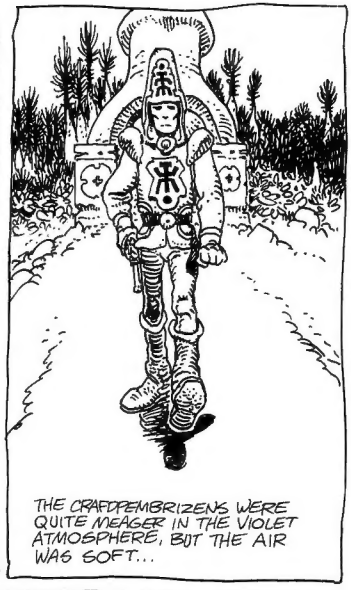
CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Subscriber please send change of address to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Allow six weeks for change. POSTMASTER: Please mail form 3579 notices to Circulation Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

ADVERTISING OFFICES: *New York:* Advertising Manager, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022 (212) 688-4070. *Chicago:* William H. Sanke, Midwest Advertising Director, 360 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. 60601 (312) 346-7145. *West Coast:* Lowell Fox and Associates, 16033 Venture Boulevard, Encino, Ca. 91436 (213) 990-2950. *Southern Offices:* Brown & Company, Northside Tower, Suite 407, 6065 Roswell Road, N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30328 (404) 252-9820.

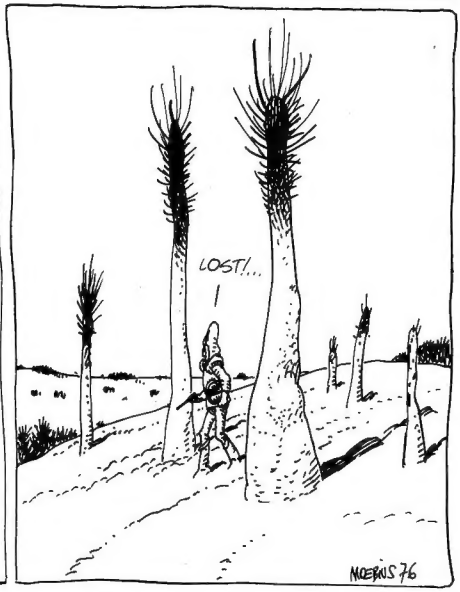
EDITORIAL INFORMATION: Contact Submissions Editor, Heavy Metal Magazine, 635 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022 or call (212) 688-4070. Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings, and photographs submitted if they are to be returned. Publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material.

MOEBIUS...

IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF WINTER ON DPEM


THE CRAFDPEMBRIZENS WERE QUITE MEAGER IN THE VIOLET ATMOSPHERE, BUT THE AIR WAS SOFT...

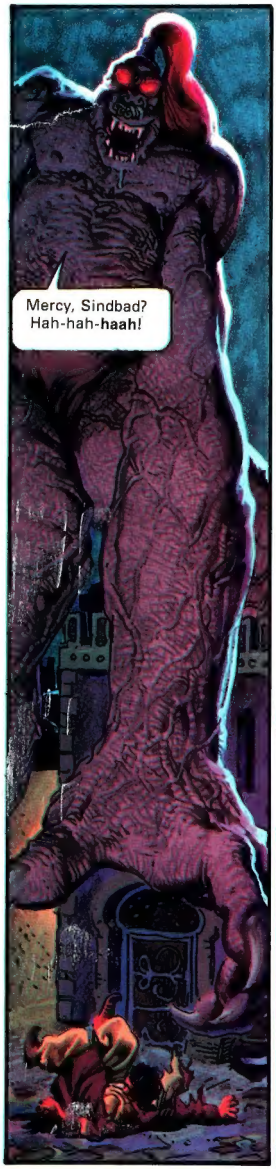
THE VILLAGE OF DEPIDPEM WAS NOT VERY FAR OFF. MY FRIEND SHATPDEM'S LETTER WAS CLEAR. HE WAS IN DANGER AND HE WAS CALLING ON ME FOR HELP!... HE ASKED ME TO KILL THE CONTINENTAL AGENT BEFORE THE 27TH, WITH A CERTAIN STYLE WEAPON, FULL FACE, STANDING UP, FROM FIVE FEET, IN THE LIGHT OF DAY... WHAT A STORY... WOW...


LOST!...
MOEBIUS 76

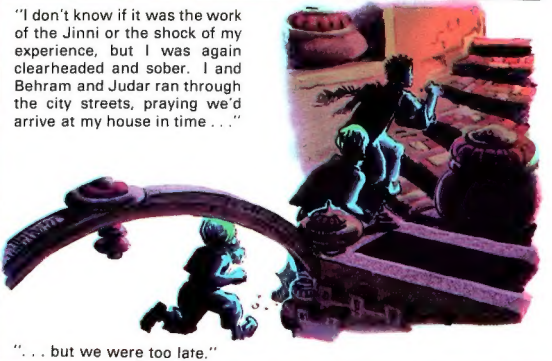
Sindbad in the Land of the Jinn

Please . . . my wife's done you no harm! Kill me if you will, but spare Zulaykha! She's a good, pious woman!
The Word of God is clear — a life for a life, a woman for a woman!
Hah-hah! So noble of you, Sindbad! But no . . . my vow is to **spare** you, and to exact the justice the law demands! You've slain **my** wife . . . and **your own**!
I beg you! Muhammad teaches the virtue of mercy!
New Tales of the Arabian Nights

©1978 Richard Corben & Jan Strnad



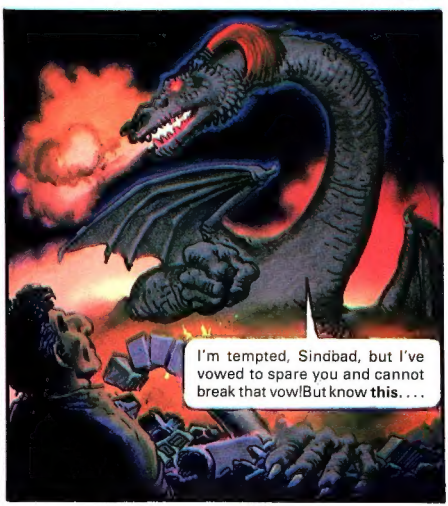
"I don't know if it was the work of the Jinni or the shock of my experience, but I was again clearheaded and sober. I and Behram and Judar ran through the city streets, praying we'd arrive at my house in time . . ."



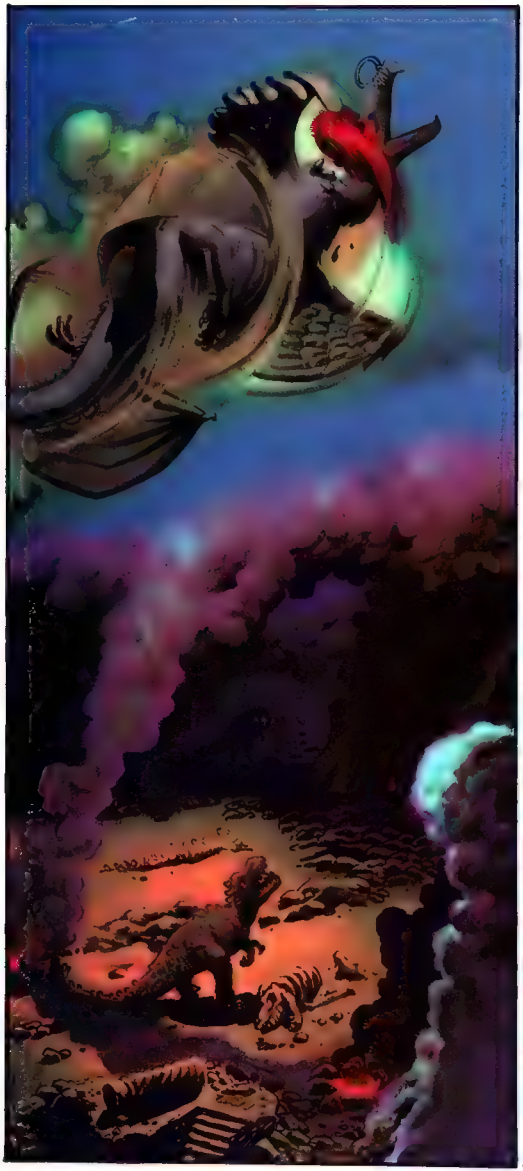
". . . but we were too late."

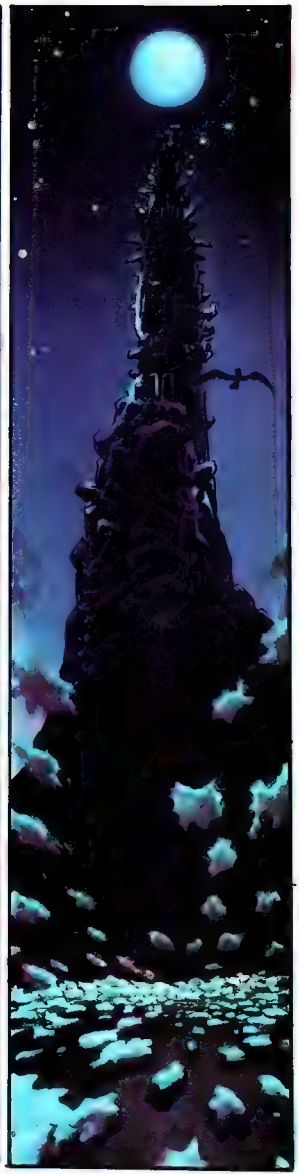
Where is she, Sindbad? Where've you hidden her?

Far beyond **your** evil reach, Ifrit! **Now** will you take my life for hers?!


I'm tempted, Sindbad, but I've vowed to spare you and cannot break that vow!But know **this**....

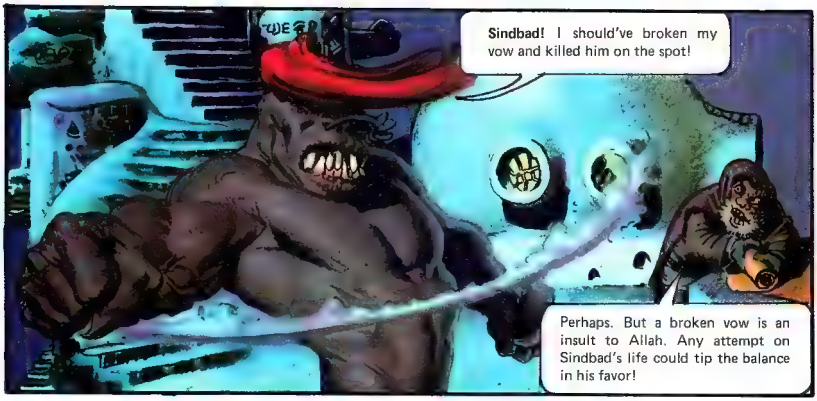
There's nowhere she can go that I cannot follow! I'll be watching you . . . and waiting! You'll not enjoy the pleasures of the flesh until my vengeance has been taken!
I'll find her, Sindbad! I'll find her!
Praise Allah, Zulaykha's escaped! But how, Sindbad? Where is she?
. . . I don't know.





Well? Is it ready?
Yes, it's done. You're lucky you came to me (damn you!)...

...your situation is most precarious! Great forces are in conflict, here and in the mortal sphere. Life and death hang in a delicate balance. You've made a new enemy who could be your undoing....


Sindbad! I should've broken my vow and killed him on the spot!
Perhaps. But a broken vow is an insult to Allah. Any attempt on Sindbad's life could tip the balance in his favor!

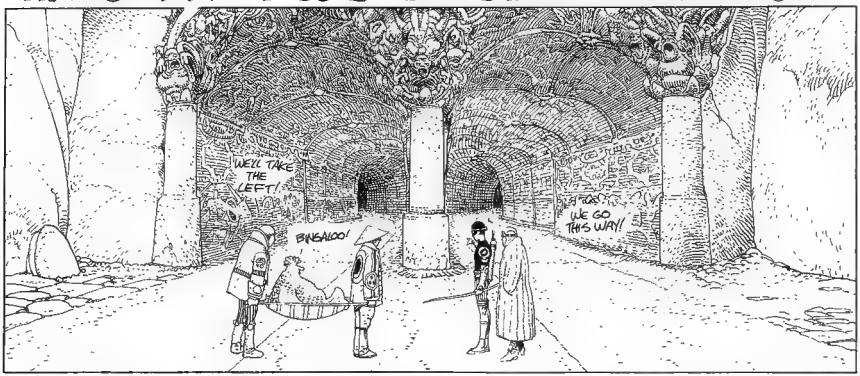
Then what can I do...if I can't slay my enemies but they may slay me?!
Be patient...and watchful! Sindbad's a reckless man—you can help him author his own defeat!
Easier said than done! I'll consider your advice—but I, too, am reckless!
So they say, Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif....

to be continued

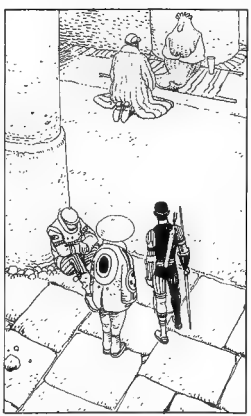
MAJOR GRUBERT'S ADVENTURE

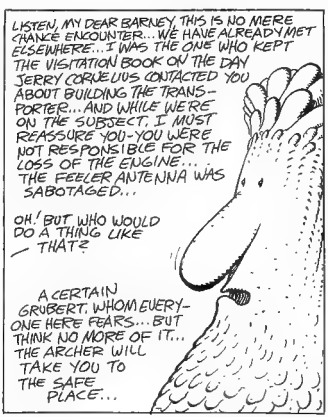
THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE OF JERRY CORNELIUS

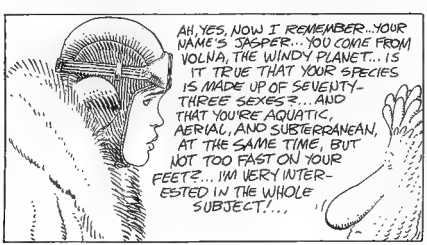
STORY TO DATE: JC'S GARAGE IS AIRTIGHT.

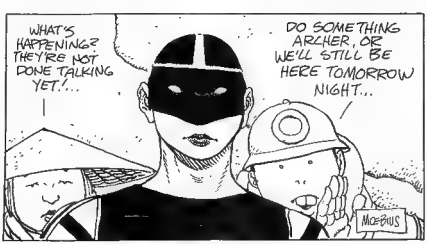


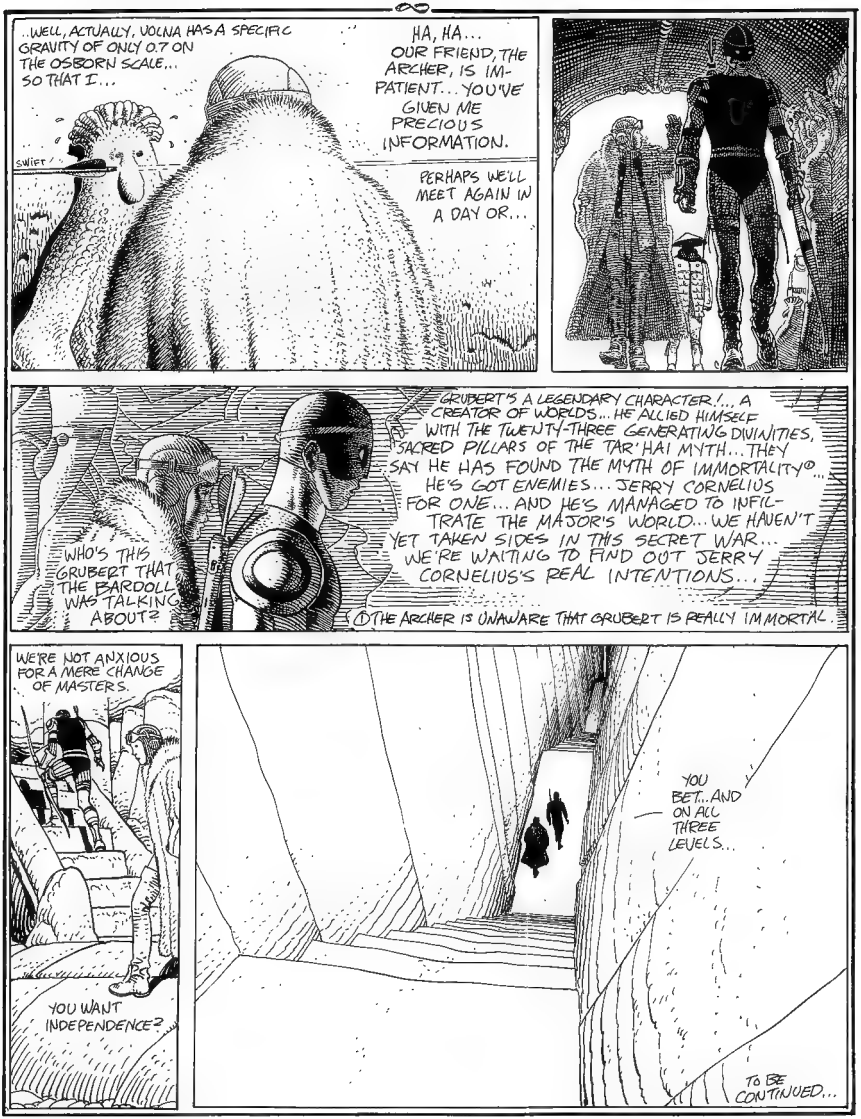
JUST A MINUTE, MY LITTLE HERPLOOK. I HAVE A FEW WORDS TO SAY TO THIS YOUNG MAN... PUT ME DOWN AND THEN YOU, YOUR COMRADE, AND THE ARCHER CAN MAKE YOURSELVES SCARCE WHILE I CHAT WITH HIM...
YES, MY LORD!




LISTEN, MY DEAR BARNEY, THIS IS NO MERE CHANCE ENCOUNTER... WE HAVE ALREADY MET ELSEWHERE... I WAS THE ONE WHO KEPT THE VISITATION BOOK ON THE DAY JERRY CORNELIUS CONTACTED YOU ABOUT BUILDING THE TRANS-PORTER... AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, I MUST REASSURE YOU - YOU WERE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LOSS OF THE ENGINE... THE FEELER ANTENNA WAS SABOTAGED...
OH! BUT WHO WOULD DO A THING LIKE THAT?
A CERTAIN GRUBERT, WHOM EVERY-ONE HERE FEARS... BUT THINK NO MORE OF IT... THE ARCHER WILL TAKE YOU TO THE SAFE PLACE...


AH, YES, NOW I REMEMBER... YOUR NAME'S JASPER... YOU COME FROM VOLNA, THE WINDY PLANET... IS IT TRUE THAT YOUR SPECIES IS MADE UP OF SEVENTY-THREE SEXES?... AND THAT YOU'RE AQUATIC, AERIAL, AND SUBTERRANEAN, AT THE SAME TIME, BUT NOT TOO FAST ON YOUR FEET?... I'M VERY INTER-ESTED IN THE WHOLE SUBJECT!...




..WELL, ACTUALLY, VOLNA HAS A SPECIFIC GRAVITY OF ONLY 0.7 ON THE OSBORN SCALE... SO THAT I...
HA, HA... OUR FRIEND, THE ARCHER, IS IMPATIENT... YOU'VE GIVEN ME PRECIOUS INFORMATION.
PERHAPS WE'LL MEET AGAIN IN A DAY OR...
WHO'S THIS GRUBERT THAT THE BARDOLL WAS TALKING ABOUT?
GRUBERT'S A LEGENDARY CHARACTER!... A CREATOR OF WORLDS... HE ALLIED HIMSELF WITH THE TWENTY-THREE GENERATING DIVINITIES, SACRED PILLARS OF THE TAR'HAI MYTH... THEY SAY HE HAS FOUND THE MYTH OF IMMORTALITY... HE'S GOT ENEMIES... JERRY CORNELIUS FOR ONE... AND HE'S MANAGED TO INFILTRATE THE MAJOR'S WORLD... WE HAVEN'T YET TAKEN SIDES IN THIS SECRET WAR... WE'RE WAITING TO FIND OUT JERRY CORNELIUS'S REAL INTENTIONS...
(THE ARCHER IS UNAWARE THAT GRUBERT IS REALLY IMMORTAL.)
WE'RE NOT ANXIOUS FOR A MERE CHANGE OF MASTERS.
YOU WANT INDEPENDENCE?
YOU BET... AND ON ALL THREE LEVELS...
TO BE CONTINUED...

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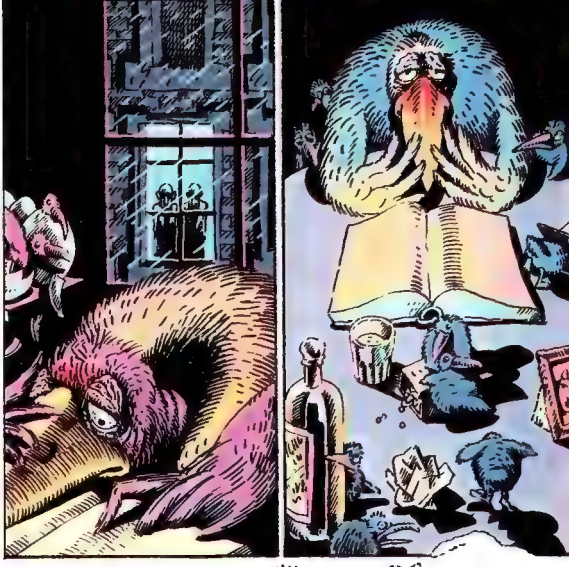
HEAVY METAL

The adult illustrated fantasy magazine



unusually tough, as in *heavy duty*. 2) heavy or clumsy in walking, **heavy-footed**, *adj.*, heavy or clumsy; tactless. 2) oppressi **heavy-handed**, *adj.*, 1) clumsy, tactless. 2) oppressive; tyrannical.

heavy metal, *n.* 1) a metal of high specific gravity. 2) gun or shot of large size, hence fig., ability, mental or bodily; power, influence, as "he is a man of *heavy metal*." 3) music that is predominantly brass or electronically produced; loud rock music with strong, sensuous rhythms. 4) from the French *Metal Hurlant*, lit., screaming metal, a magnificent new magazine with emphasis on brilliant and unusual science fiction/fantasy art, bizarre stories, etc.

racket, *n.* (Slang), a branch of crime that involves or may personal violence.

compound like water, composed of oxygen and studies and as a moderator in

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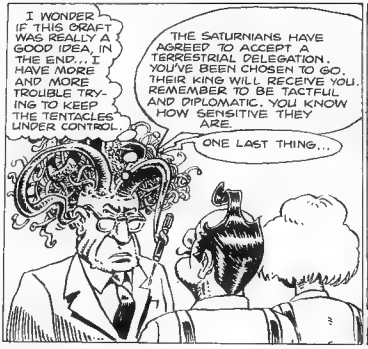
MISSION ON SATURN !

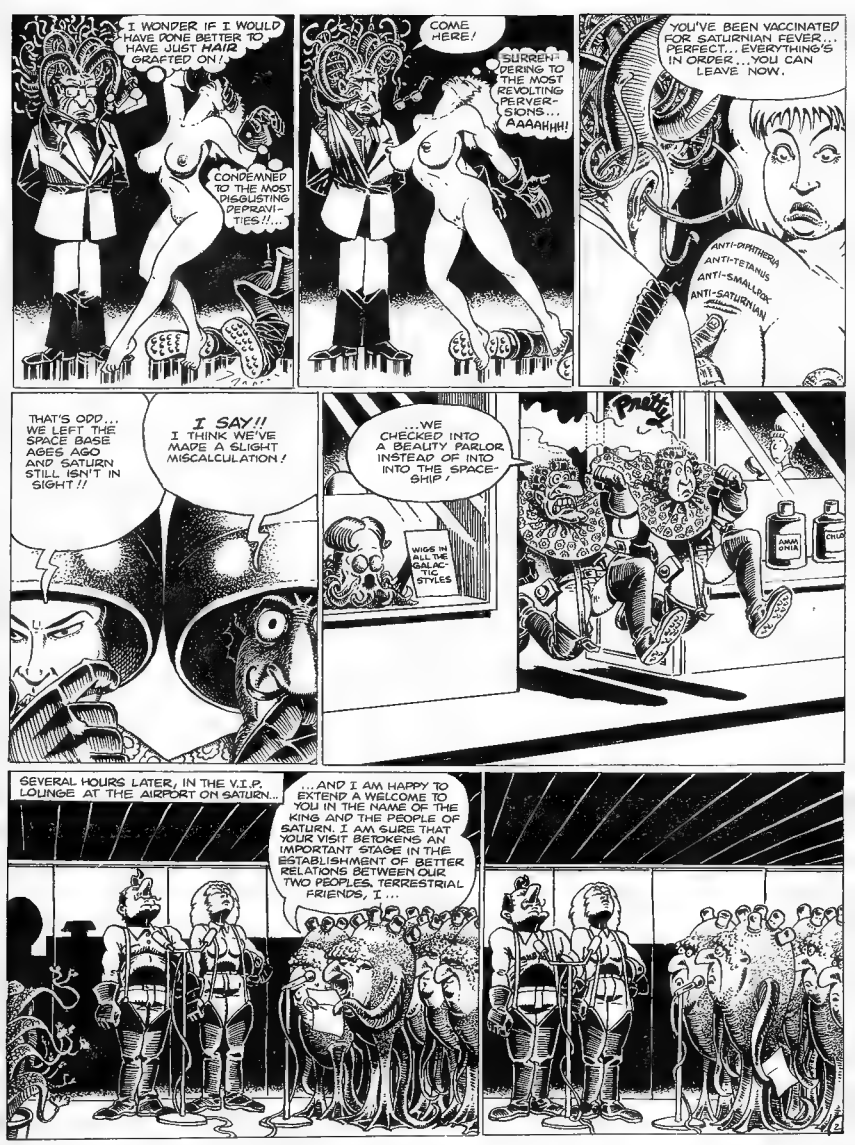
DOUG IRONWHITE, SPECIAL SPACE AGENT, AND VASELINE, HIS ASSISTANT-AND-NOTORIOUS-PARAMOUR, ARE SUMMONED TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS...
I WONDER WHAT THE MINISTER WANTS TO SEE US ABOUT...

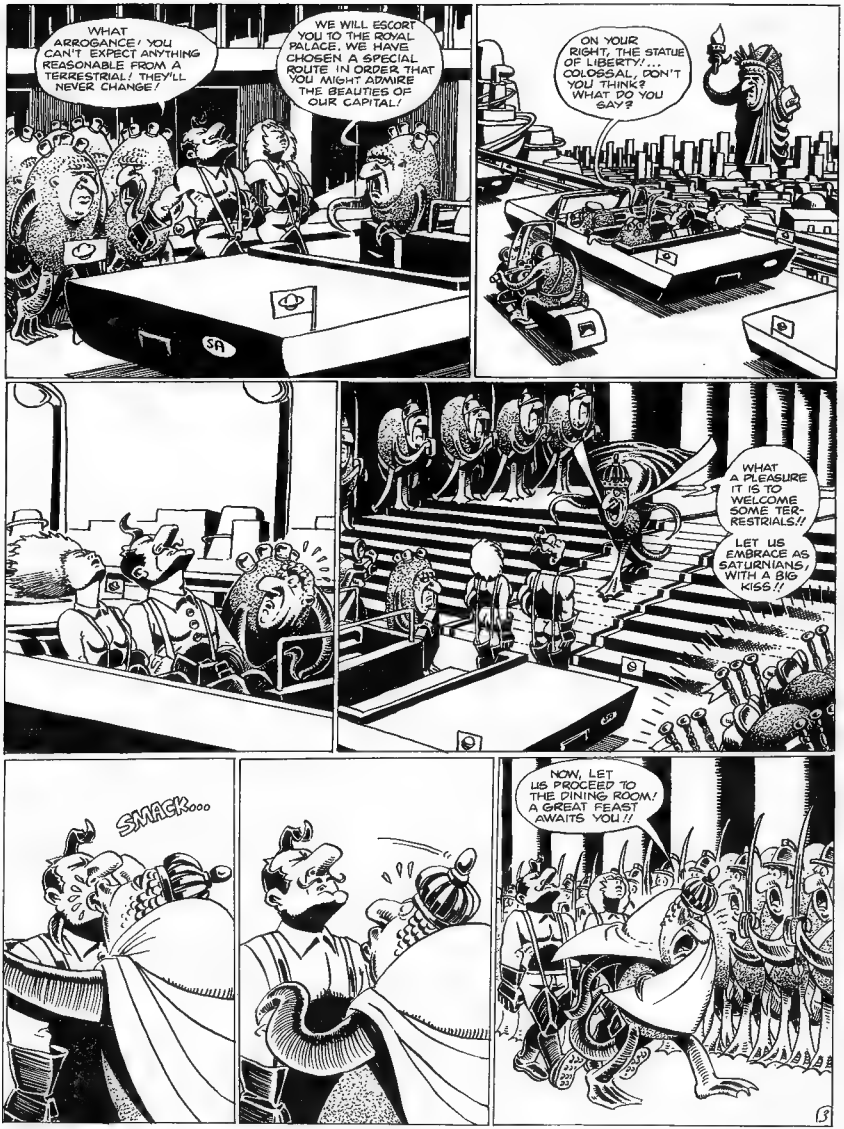
AND I WONDER WHAT'S THE POINT OF A GANG DRAWN IN A SCIENCE FICTION STYLE WITH THE HEROES WEARING SEWER WORKERS' COSTUMES FROM THE 1970S...

AH! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
YOU SEEM QUITE NERVOUS!
WHAT'S--
IT'S LACK OF TOBACCO. WE MADE A MISTAKE ON THE GROUND FLOOR. WE DECIDED TO STOP SMOKING INSTEAD OF TAKING THE ELEVATOR!

I'VE CALLED YOU HERE TO ENTRUST YOU WITH AN EXTREMELY DELICATE MISSION. YOU KNOW THAT OUR RELATIONS WITH SATURN ARE VERY BAD--SO MUCH SO THAT WE ANTICIPATE OPEN CONFLICT. WE WILL DO ANYTHING TO AVOID THAT...
CONTRARY TO APPEARANCES, THE MINISTER IS A CLASSICALLY TYPICAL HUMANOID. THE TENTACLES ON HIS HEAD WERE GRAFTED ON AT HIS REQUEST, PURELY IN ORDER TO SATISFY HIS VANITY.


I WONDER IF THIS GRAFT WAS REALLY A GOOD IDEA, IN THE END... I HAVE MORE AND MORE TROUBLE TRYING TO KEEP THE TENTACLES UNDER CONTROL.
THE SATURNIANS HAVE AGREED TO ACCEPT A TERRESTRIAL DELEGATION. YOU'VE BEEN CHOSEN TO GO. THEIR KING WILL RECEIVE YOU. REMEMBER TO BE TACTFUL AND DIPLOMATIC. YOU KNOW HOW SENSITIVE THEY ARE.
ONE LAST THING...

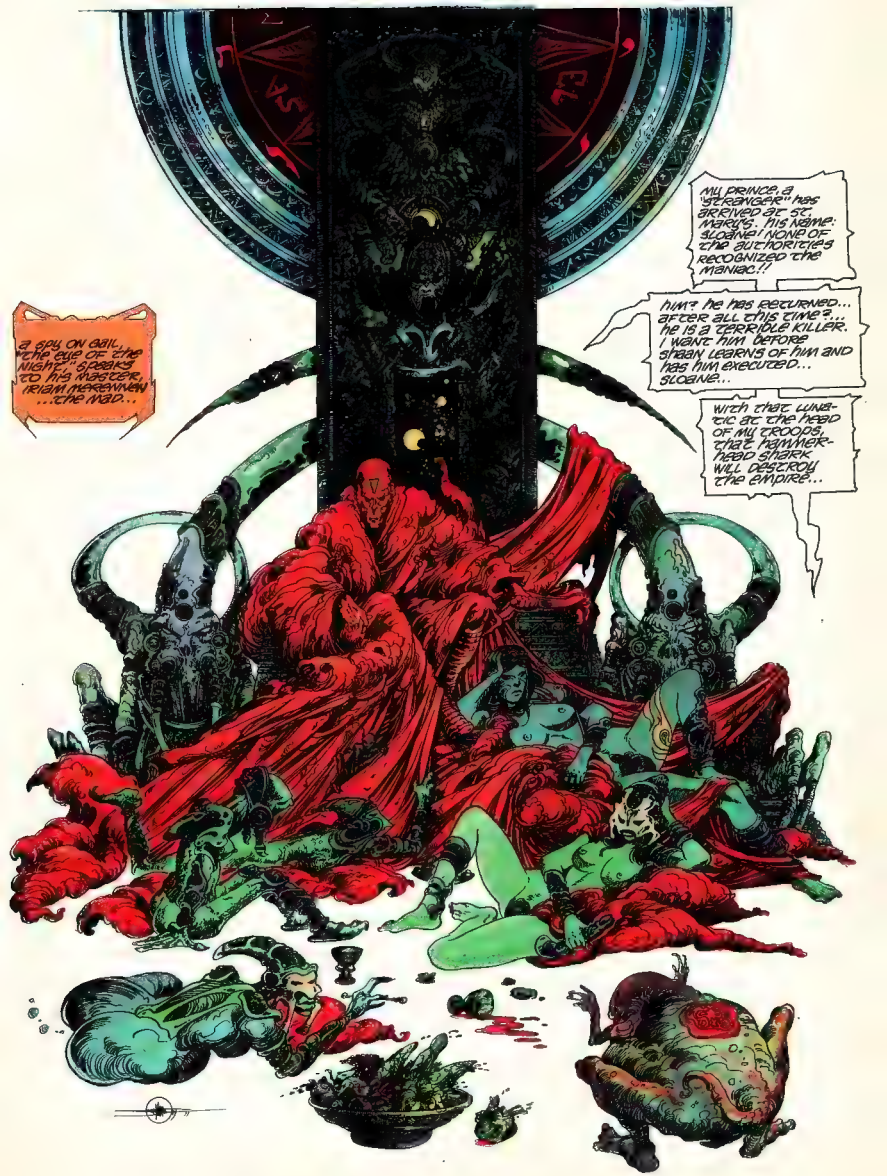

I WONDER IF I WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER TO HAVE JUST HAIR GRAFTED ON!
CONDEMNED TO THE MOST DISGUSTING DEPRAVITIES!!..
COME HERE!
SURRENDERING TO THE MOST REVOLTING PERVERSIONS... AAAAHHH!
YOU'VE BEEN VACCINATED FOR SATURNIAN FEVER... PERFECT... EVERYTHING'S IN ORDER... YOU CAN LEAVE NOW.
ANTI-DIPTHERIA
ANTI-TETANUS
ANTI-SMALLPOX
ANTI-SATURNIAN
THAT'S ODD... WE LEFT THE SPACE BASE AGES AGO AND SATURN STILL ISN'T IN SIGHT!!
I SAY!! I THINK WE'VE MADE A SLIGHT MISCALCULATION!
...WE CHECKED INTO A BEAUTY PARLOR INSTEAD OF INTO INTO THE SPACE-SHIP!
WIGS IN ALL THE GALACTIC STYLES
Pretty
AMMONIA
CHLO
SEVERAL HOURS LATER, IN THE V.I.P. LOUNGE AT THE AIRPORT ON SATURN...
...AND I AM HAPPY TO EXTEND A WELCOME TO YOU IN THE NAME OF THE KING AND THE PEOPLE OF SATURN. I AM SURE THAT YOUR VISIT BETOKENS AN IMPORTANT STAGE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO PEOPLES, TERRESTRIAL FRIENDS, I...


WHAT ARROGANCE! YOU CAN'T EXPECT ANYTHING REASONABLE FROM A TERRESTRIAL! THEY'LL NEVER CHANGE!
WE WILL ESCORT YOU TO THE ROYAL PALACE. WE HAVE CHOSEN A SPECIAL ROUTE IN ORDER THAT YOU MIGHT ADMIRE THE BEAUTIES OF OUR CAPITAL!
SA
ON YOUR RIGHT, THE STATUE OF LIBERTY!... COLOSSAL, DON'T YOU THINK? WHAT DO YOU SAY?
WHAT A PLEASURE IT IS TO WELCOME SOME TERRESTRIALS!!
LET US EMBRACE AS SATURNIANS, WITH A BIG KISS!!
SMACK.ooo
NOW, LET US PROCEED TO THE DINING ROOM! A GREAT FEAST AWAITS YOU!!

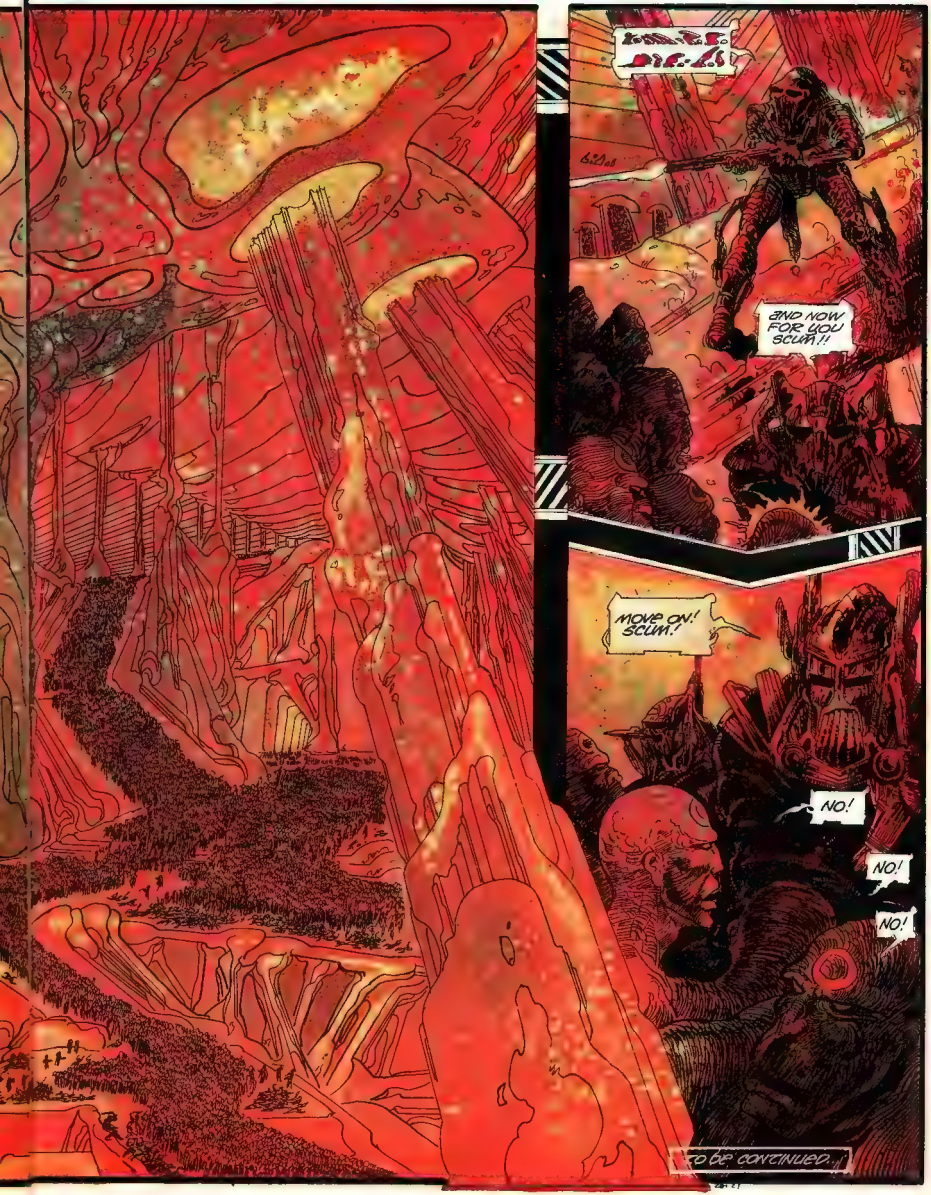
WHAT A MARVELOUS OUTFIT YOU'RE WEARING! MINE IS A GENUINE GLOBORK. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
TASTE THIS KOLHBORGFF SAUCE IN THE BARGROLICK STYLE, WITH A SAINT KOKOFF 73. THERE'S NOTHING BETTER. AND LOOK AT THE DANCING GIRL! ISN'T SHE GRACEFUL? SHE'S MY DAUGHTER, AND SHE PREPARED THIS DANCE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.
ENOUGH'S ENOUGH! YOU HAVE INSULTED MY MINISTER!! MY MONUMENTS!! MYSELF!! MY WIFE!! MY DAUGHTER!! MY FOOD!! THAT'S IT!! I WILL NOT HAVE SATURN INSULTED ANY FURTHER!! I'M THROWING YOU OUT!!
AND I'M DECLARING WAR ON EARTH!!!
SATURN AIRPOR
EARTH AIRPORT
ABOUT TIME!! WE COULDN'T HOLD OUR BREATH ANY LONGER IN THAT PUTRID SATURNIAN ATMOSPHERE. IT'S COMPLETELY UNBREATHABLE FOR HUMANS!!
SATURN AIR FORCE
PFFFFFFF
I.D. PETILLON

GAIL
EPISODE NUMBER THREE
ENTER AGAIN...
PASS!
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE! NO MORE CONVOYS! I CAN'T IMPRISON THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE! I DON'T HAVE THE SPACE. SHAAN REFUSES TO READ MY REPORTS!
WOLFGANG DURGLYOBY, PRISON COMMANDANT.

DIALOGUE:
·NO ONE MUST QUESTION THE ACTIONS OF THE EMPEROR!
·I KNOW, I KNOW, BUT THE SITUATION IS CRITICAL. I CAN NO LONGER EXTERMINATE THEM ALL. AND THE ROBOTS HAVE SCARRED TO WORK ON THEIR OWN BEHALF. SOME PRISONERS HAVE EVEN LEARNED TO MASTER THEM...
·DESTROY THE ROBOTS.!!
IMPOSSIBLE! THEY ARE CONNECTED TO A DEFENSE SYSTEM. EVERYTHING IS PROGRAMMED. WE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH PROVISIONING, NOT ENOUGH LIVING CREATURES FOR PERSONNEL, A DISORGANIZED INTERIOR ORGANIZATION, MORE PRINCES TAKING TOO MANY PRISONERS. MERAMMEN ALONE HAS...
·SHAAN KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING. THE PRINCES PAY DEAR FOR THEIR SLAVES!
·BY THIS RATE, MERAMMEN WILL SOON BE SITTING ON THE THRONE!
·YOU'RE MISTAKEN, WOLFGANG...
·WELL! THINK OF WHERE WE ARE! SAINT MARKUS IS NO LONGER THE INVINCIBLE BASTION THAT IT ONCE WAS, THE TERROR OF THE AMOEBA WE HAVE BEEN SURPASSED. I'M TIRED OF REPEATING IT. WE CANNOT HOLD ON MUCH LONGER. IT WOULD ONLY TAKE A SMALL INCIDENT TO...
"...TO DO WHAT?
HEY, YOU SCUM THERE, COME...


A spy on Gail, "the eye of the night", speaks to his master, Arjan Mekkannen ...the mad...
My prince, a "stranger" has arrived at St. Mark's. His name: Sloane! None of the authorities recognized the maniac!!
him? he has returned... after all this time?... he is a terrible killer. I want him before Straan learns of him and has him executed... Sloane...
With that lunatic at the head of my troops, that hammerhead shark will destroy the empire...

take him now! i have spoken!
here all is enormous and vast, and even though no one can escape, nor hide himself: all the walls have eyes and even the air is saturated. everywhere the psi waves, worn of the useless or revolt, provoke a desire for suicide, an infinite terror, then a taste for murder, cruel and invisible torture to which is added the sadism of the guards and the insane experiments of the tre-2 doctors. but in spite of all...


AND NOW FOR YOU SCUM!!
MOVE ON! SCUM!
NO!
NO!
NO!
TO BE CONTINUED...

6 FROM

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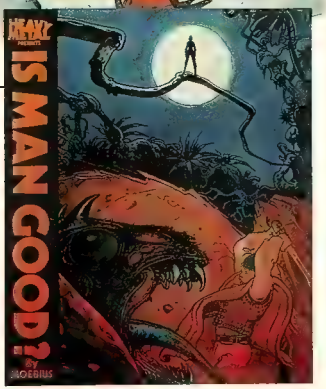

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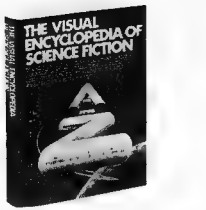

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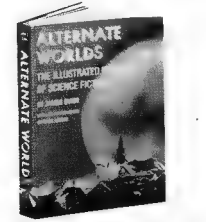

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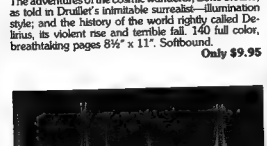

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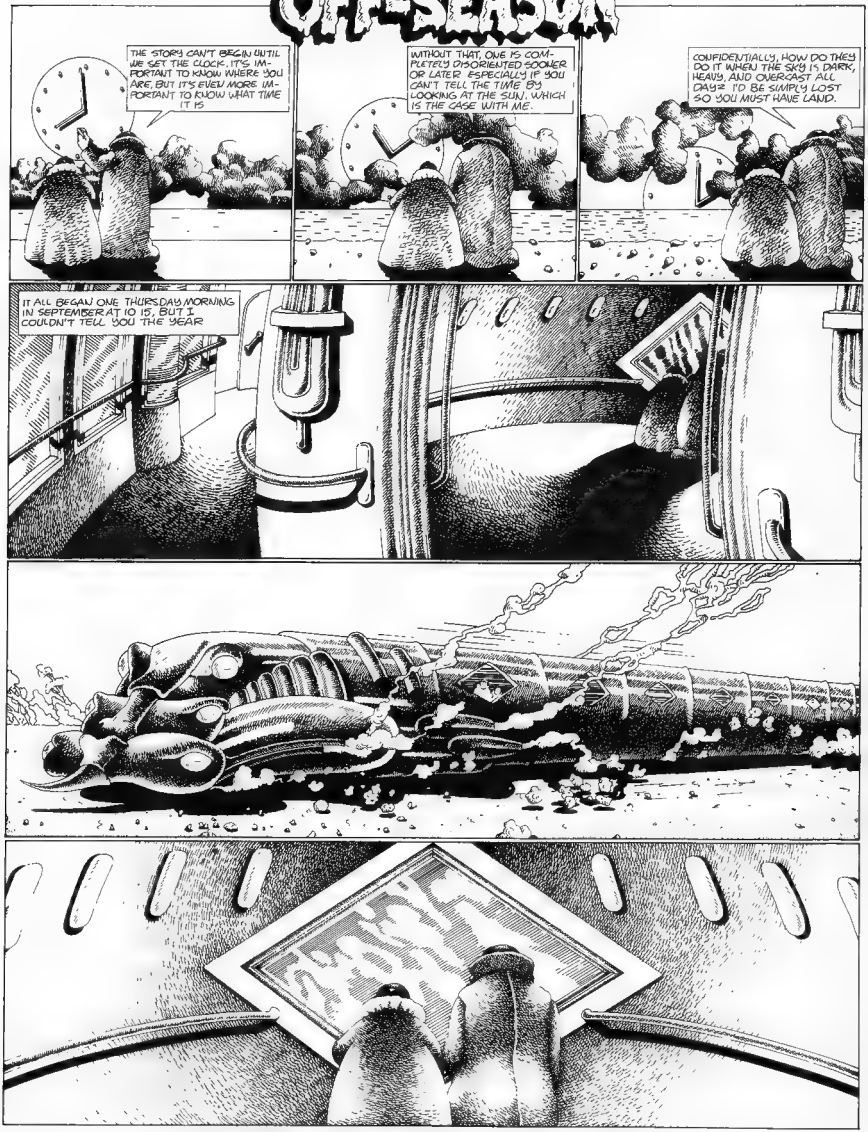
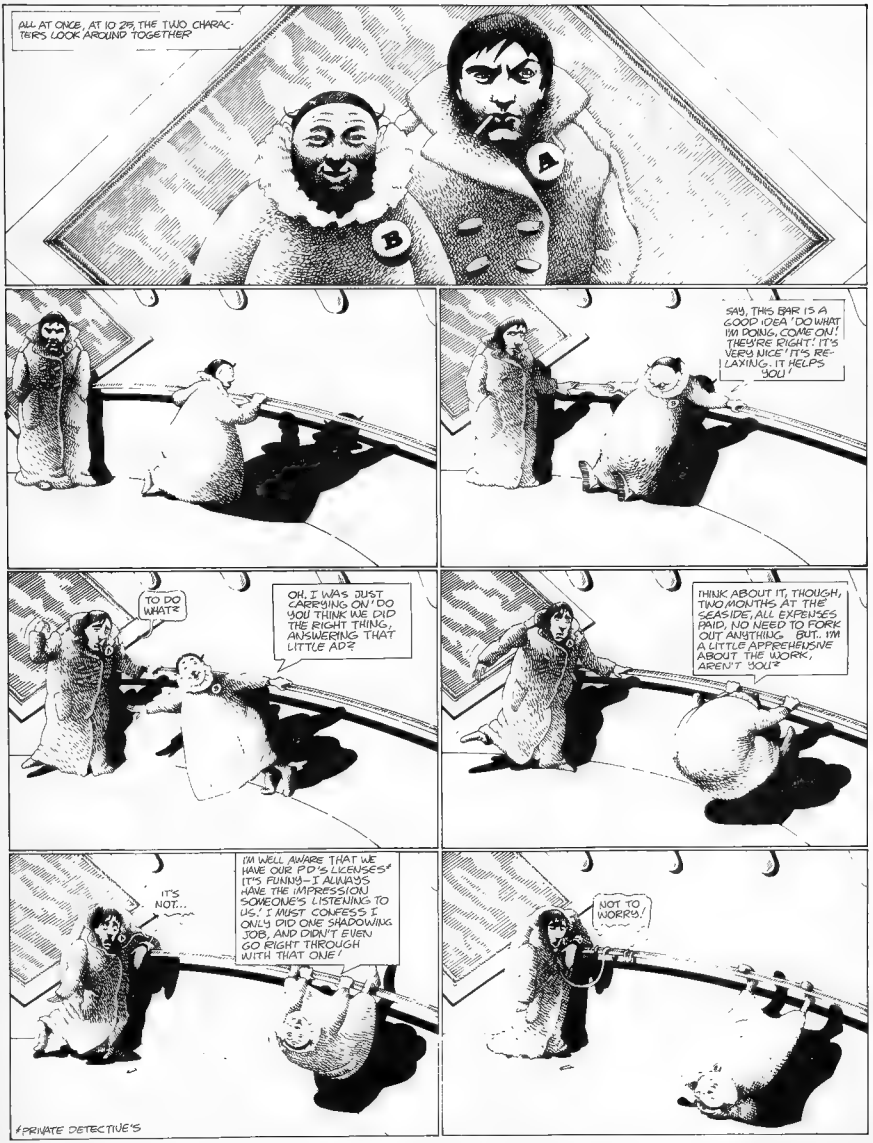
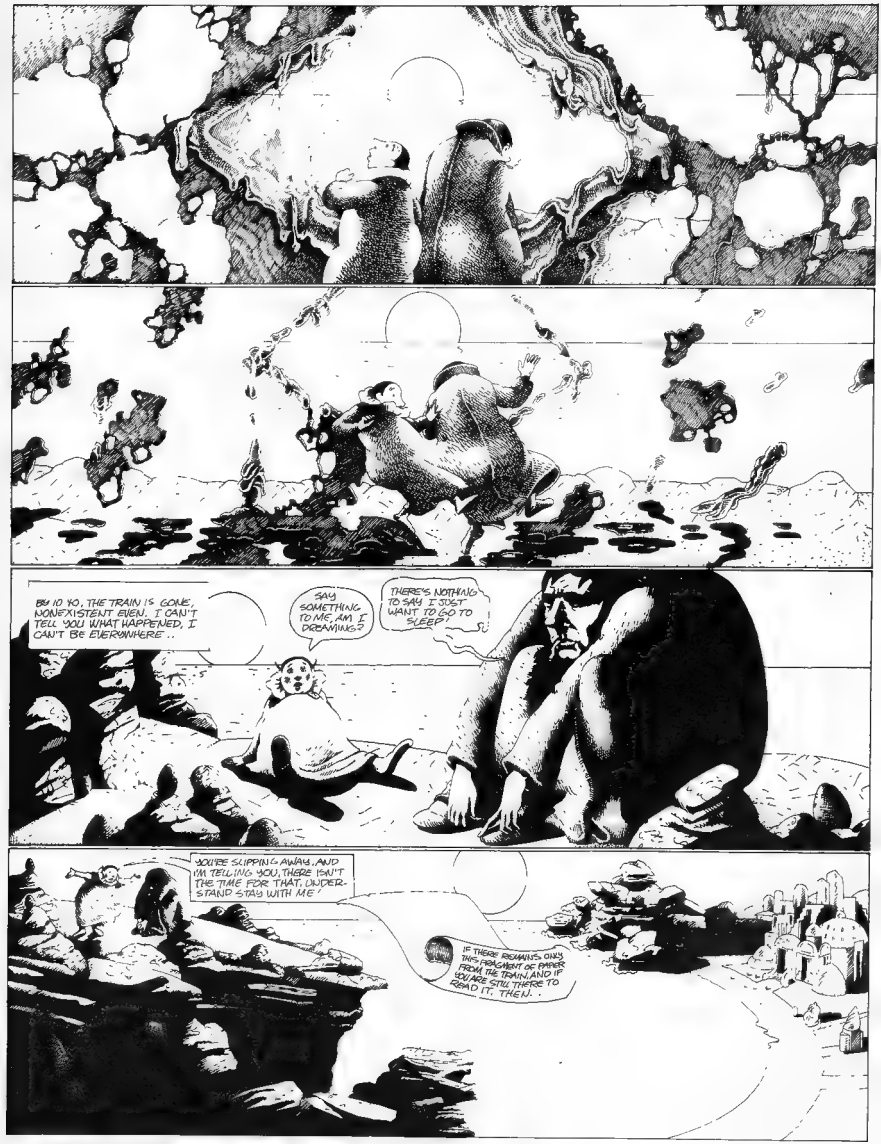
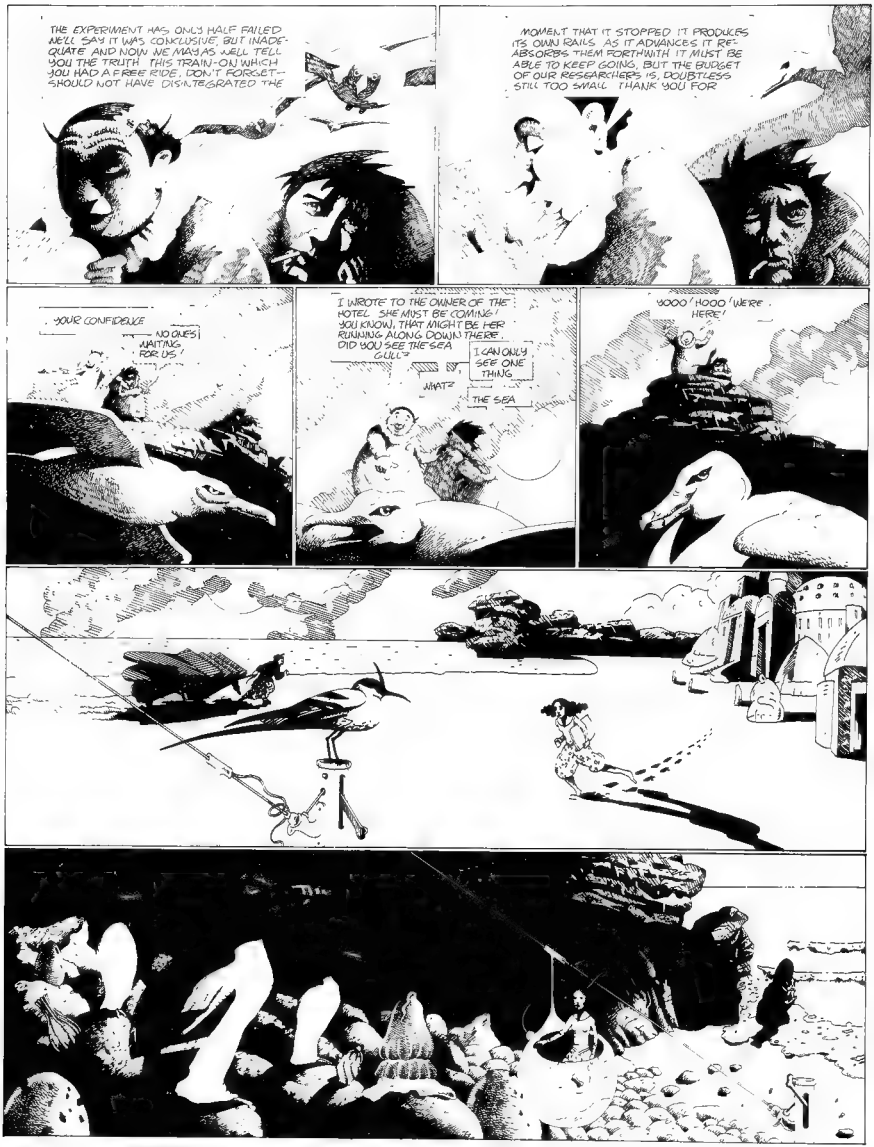

THE STORY CAN'T BEGIN UNTIL WE SET THE CLOCK. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE. BUT IT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS
WITHOUT THAT, ONE IS COMPLETELY DISORIENTED SOONER OR LATER ESPECIALLY IF YOU CAN'T TELL THE TIME BY LOOKING AT THE SUN, WHICH IS THE CASE WITH ME.
CONFIDENTIALLY, HOW DO THEY DO IT WHEN THE SKY IS DARK, HEAVY, AND OVERCAST ALL DAY? I'D BE SIMPLY LOST SO YOU MUST HAVE LAND.
IT ALL BEGAN ONE THURSDAY MORNING IN SEPTEMBER AT 10:15, BUT I COULDN'T TELL YOU THE YEAR

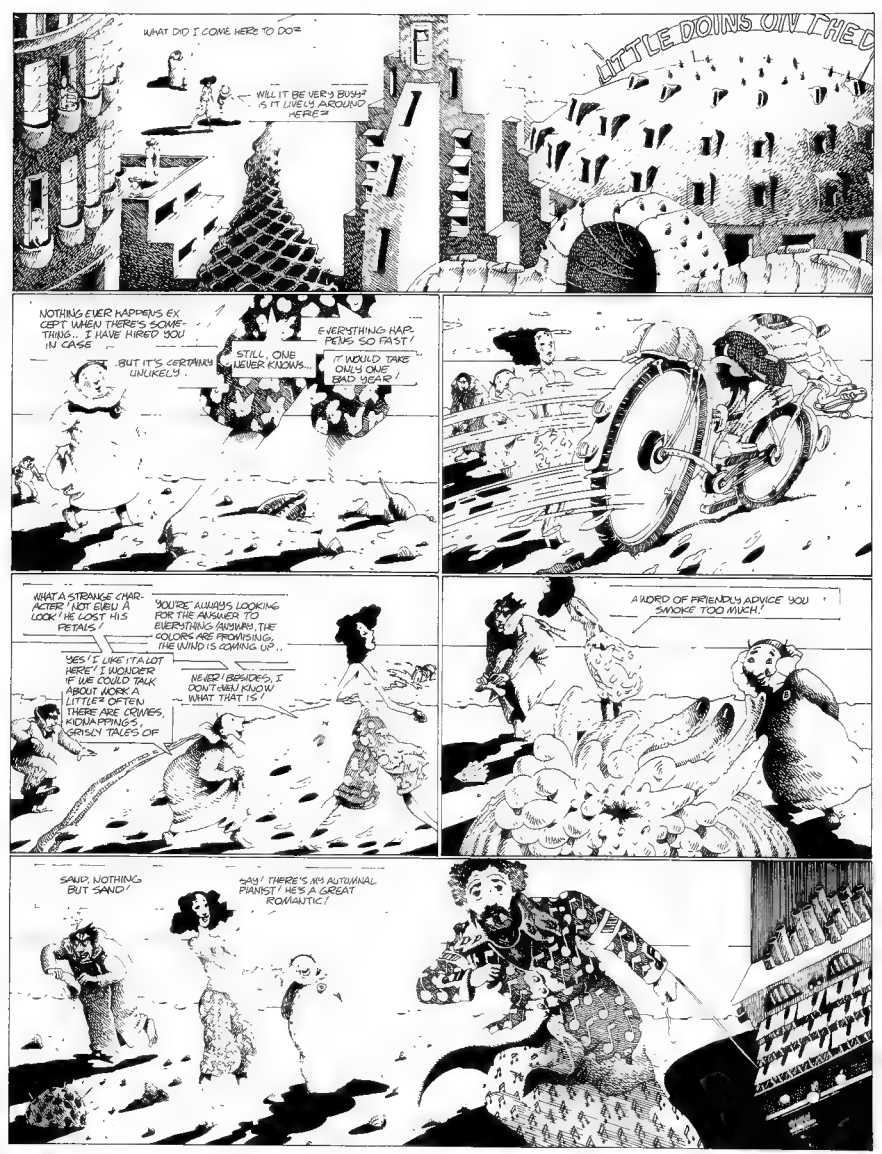

ALL AT ONCE, AT 10 25, THE TWO CHARACTERS LOOK AROUND TOGETHER
A
B
SAY, THIS BAR IS A GOOD IDEA 'DO WHAT I'M DOING, COME ON! THEY'RE RIGHT: IT'S VERY NICE! IT'S RELAXING. IT HELPS YOU!
TO DO WHAT?
OH, I WAS JUST CAREWING ON 'DO YOU THINK WE DID THE RIGHT THING, ANSWERING THAT LITTLE AD?
THINK ABOUT IT, THOUGH, TWO MONTHS AT THE SEASIDE, ALL EXPENSES PAID, NO NEED TO FORK OUT ANYTHING. BUT, I'M A LITTLE APPREHEWSIVE ABOUT THE WORK, AREN'T YOU?
IT'S NOT...
I'M WELL AWARE THAT WE HAVE OUR P.D.'S LICENSES* IT'S FUNNY—I ALWAYS HAVE THE IMPRESSION SOMEONE'S LISTENING TO US. I MUST CONFESS I ONLY DID ONE SHADOWING JOB, AND DIDN'T EVEN GO RIGHT THROUGH WITH THAT ONE!
NOT TO WORRY!
*PRIVATE DETECTIVE'S

THE C.I.A.B.R. THANKS THE ONLY TWO PASSENGERS ON THIS TRAIN FOR HAVING DECIDED TO TAKE THIS TRIAL RUN ON THE EXPERIMENTAL AUTO-PRODUCTO AT THEIR OWN RISK. IN THE NAME OF ALL HUMANITY, WE THANK YOU! YOU ARE AT THE SEASIDE AS SCHEDULED.
THE DIRTY RATS, THEY COULD HAVE WARNED US!
ANYWAY, WE DON'T HAVE THE WHEREWITHAL TO PAY FOR A NORMAL TRAIN, SO.
THEN WE'RE REALLY TRAPPED!
COME NOW! HAVE CONFIDENCE IN US!
YOU SHOULD TRY THIS, TOO. IT'S PACIFYING. IT PREVENTS OVERDRAMATIZATION. YOU KNOW, AFTER FIVE YEARS OF UNEMPLOYMENT, THE LITTLE MATTER OF HOW WE GOT HERE SEEMS UNIMPORTANT TO ME!
YEAH!


BY IO YO, THE TRAIN IS GONE, NONEXISTENT EVEN. I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED, I CAN'T BE EVERYWHERE..
SAY SOMETHING TO ME, AM I DREAMING?
THERE'S NOTHING TO SAY I JUST WANT TO GO TO SLEEP!
YOU'RE SLIPPING AWAY..AND I'M TELLING YOU, THERE ISN'T THE TIME FOR THAT, UNDERSTAND STAY WITH ME!
IF THERE REMAINS ONLY THIS FRAGMENT OF PAPER FROM THE TRAIN, AND IF YOU ARE STILL THERE TO READ IT, THEN..


THE EXPERIMENT HAS ONLY HALF FAILED. WE'LL SAY IT WAS CONCLUSIVE, BUT INADEQUATE. AND NOW, WE MAY AS WELL TELL YOU THE TRUTH. THIS TRAIN--ON WHICH YOU HAD A FREE RIDE, DON'T FORGET--SHOULD NOT HAVE DISINTEGRATED THE
MOMENT THAT IT STOPPED. IT PRODUCES ITS OWN RAILS. AS IT ADVANCES, IT RE-ABSORBS THEM FORTHWITH. IT MUST BE ABLE TO KEEP GOING. BUT THE BUDGET OF OUR RESEARCHERS IS, DOUBTLESS, STILL TOO SMALL. THANK YOU FOR
YOUR CONFIDENCE
NO ONES WAITING FOR US!
I WROTE TO THE OWNER OF THE HOTEL. SHE MUST BE COMING! YOU KNOW, THAT MIGHT BE HER RUNNING ALONG DOWN THERE. DID YOU SEE THE SEA GULL?
I CAN ONLY SEE ONE THING.
WHAT?
THE SEA
YOOO! HOOO! WE'RE HERE!

YOU'VE KEPT YOUR APPOINTMENT! THAT'S GOOD! I HAVE YOUR CONTRACTS!
BUT FIRST OF ALL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!
LADIES?
OH, HOW FOOLISH OF ME! IT'S OBVIOUS YOU HAVE INDEED REALLY LIVED! COME, DON'T STAND THERE IN THE WIND! WE'LL TALK ON THE WAY
BY JIMS, IT WAS ALL A LITTLE LESS MYSTERIOUS
I'LL EXPLAIN MY BUSINESS TO YOU LATER. IT'S AN OLD DREAM. IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME SINCE I BOUGHT THIS HOUSE... SAY, YOU DON'T LOOK AT ALL WELL!
IN THE DOIN'S ON THE DUNES
I FEEL SICK!
I'M AFRAID OF HEIGHTS! REALLY!
WHAT DELICATE CREATURES! IT'S ALL RIGHT, WE'RE ALMOST THERE!


WHAT DID I COME HERE TO DO?
WILL IT BE VERY BUSY? IS IT LIVELY AROUND HERE?
LITTLE DOINS ON THE
NOTHING EVER HAPPENS EXCEPT WHEN THERE'S SOMETHING... I HAVE HIRED YOU IN CASE
...BUT IT'S CERTAINLY UNLIKELY.
STILL, ONE NEVER KNOWS...
EVERYTHING HAPPENS SO FAST!
IT WOULD TAKE ONLY ONE BAD YEAR!
WHAT A STRANGE CHARACTER! NOT EVEN A LOCK! HE LOST HIS PETALS!
YOU'RE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR THE ANSWER TO EVERYTHING, YAHWAH. THE COLORS ARE PROMISING, THE WIND IS COMING UP...
YES. I LIKE IT A LOT HERE. I WONDER IF WE COULD TALK ABOUT WORK A LITTLE? OFTEN THERE ARE CRIMES, KIDNAPPINGS, GRISLY TALES OF
NEVER! BESIDES, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS!
A WORD OF FRIENDLY ADVICE YOU SMOKE TOO MUCH!
SAND, NOTHING BUT SAND!
SAY! THERE'S AN AUTUMNAL PIANIST! HE'S A GREAT ROMANTIC!

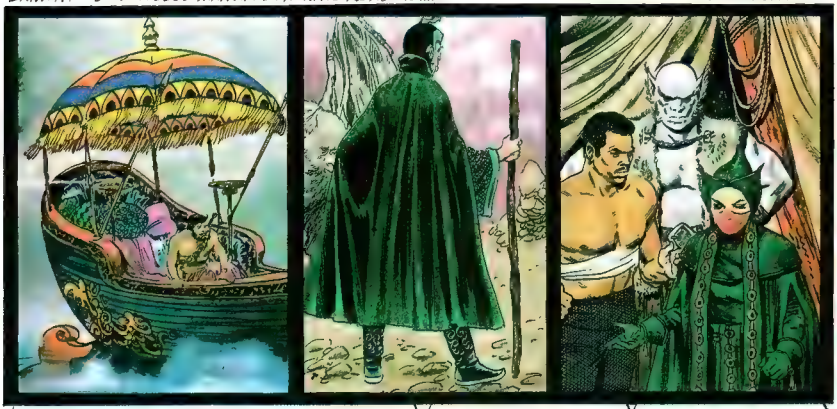
SMACK!
WE GOT IT ON THE BRAIN, UNDERSTAND?
A STAGNANT SEA! A VERY BAD SIGN! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
YOU'RE MAD! SURELY SHE'S GOING TO COME OUT OF IT AND THEN WE'LL BE HIRED. FOR TWO MONTHS! WE AGREED TO BE A TEAM! TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER, YOU'LL SEE!
IS IT ALWAYS LIKE THIS HERE?
NO, THIS IS A PARTICULARLY WINDY DAY! JUST BE PATIENT!
THE PIANIST DISAPPEARED, DOUBTLESS INTO THE HOTEL! I MYSELF GOT SAND IN MY EYES AND CAN'T MAKE OUT ANYTHING.
WAIT FOR ME, DAMN IT!
WHAT'S DOIN'S IN THE DUNES?
GOOD, THAT'S NOT ALL. I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU THE ROOMS, INTRODUCE YOU TO THE RESIDENTS. I WANT YOU TO HAVE THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL, IN CASE THERE'S YOU MUSTN'T MISS A THING. BUT I DON'T HAVE TO TEACH YOU YOUR TRADE, DO I?
AT 11:25, EVERYTHING WAS CALM IN THIS LOST CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE...
STORY ZHA ART: NICOLE CLAVELOUX
TO BE CONTINUED

ORION

CHAPTER FIVE

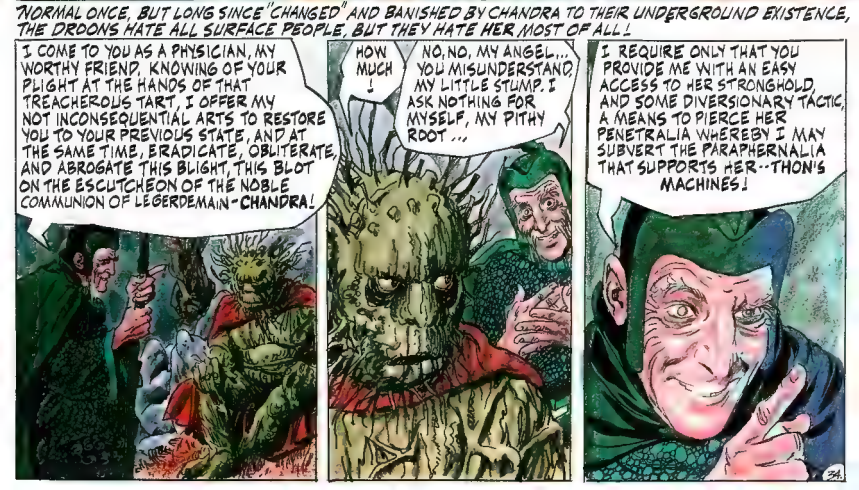
ORION HAS PENETRATED THE DARK VALLEY OF XANSRA TO AN ANCIENT CITY OF RUINS WHERE HE DISCOVERS --- A ROYAL BARGE OF EARLIER TIMES, WHICH IS NOW CARRYING HIM HE KNOWS NOT WHERE, AND IS PILOTED BY PHANTOM OARSMEN. ONLY HOURS AWAY AT THE EDGE OF THE VALLEY, LAMONTHOS PONDERS THE POSSIBILITY OF A SURREPTITIOUS AVENUE INTO CHANDRA'S CLOISTER. MEANWHILE, MANILA HAS TEMPORARILY ALLIED HIMSELF WITH THE MYSTERIOUS FELINA AND HER GIANT TROGLODYTE SERVANT, URZA -- ALL THREE OF THEM SEEKING LAMIA FOR --- FOR LESS THAN AFFECTIONATE REASONS....

© 1978 GRAY MORROW

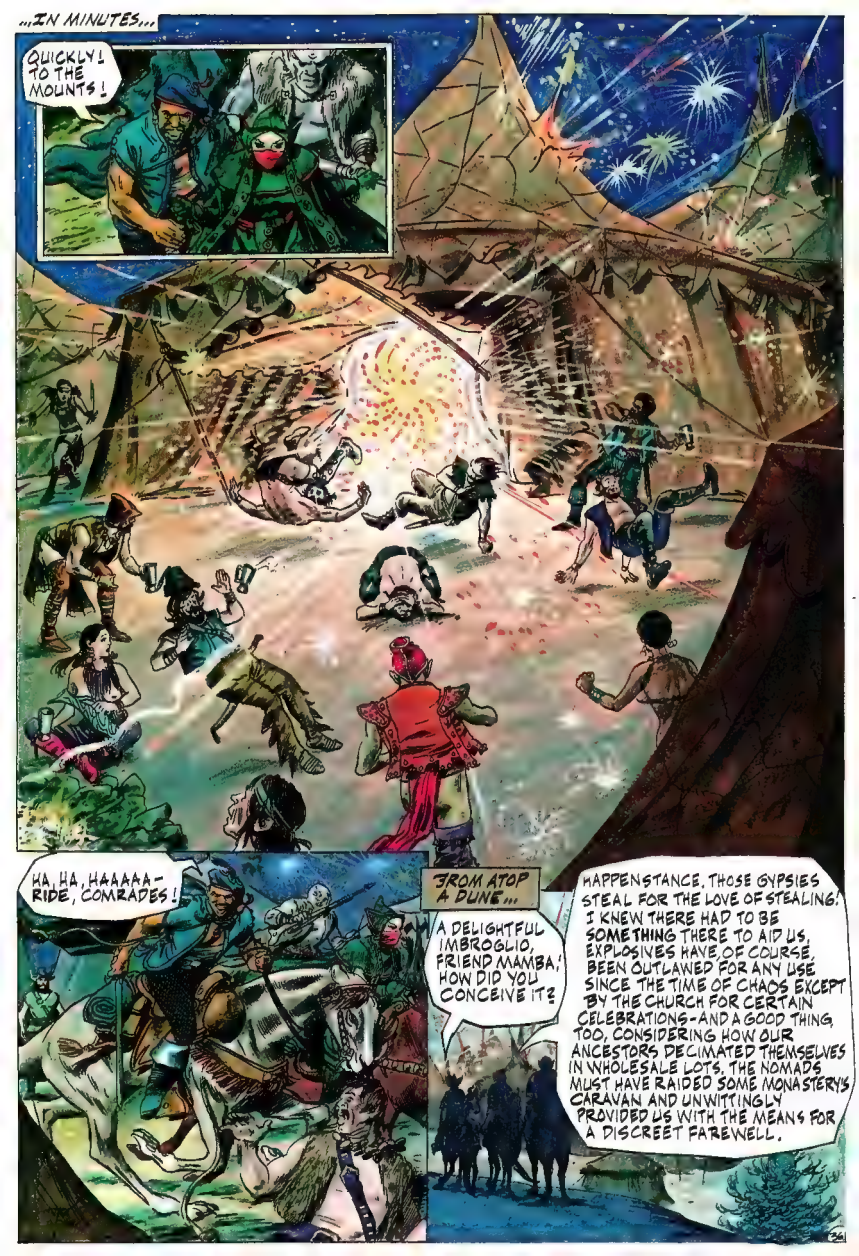


XANSRA! THE LOST SEA! CHANDRA! THAT WITCH HAS ORION IN HER TOILS. SHE, TOO, COVETS THE SWORD. THAT'S A PROBLEM... INSURMOUNTABLE FOR ANY BUT ONE OF MY CAPABILITIES, OF COURSE. HMMM ... FOR THIS I SHALL REQUIRE AN AGENT, MORE EFFICIENT THAN THE LAMENTABLE MAMBA... HEH! LATE, LAMENTED MAMBA I MEAN.
WHAT'S THAT, MY DEARS? HE STILL LIVES!? SAVED BY BANDITS!...?
STUPIDS! NITS! CRAVENS! DUNG! WHY DO THE GODS SPITE ME!? ARE THERE NO SUITABLE SERVITORS ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH FOR MY NEEDS!?
WAIT!...
...NOT ON THE EARTH--BUT, UNDER IT! OF COURSE— THE DROONS!

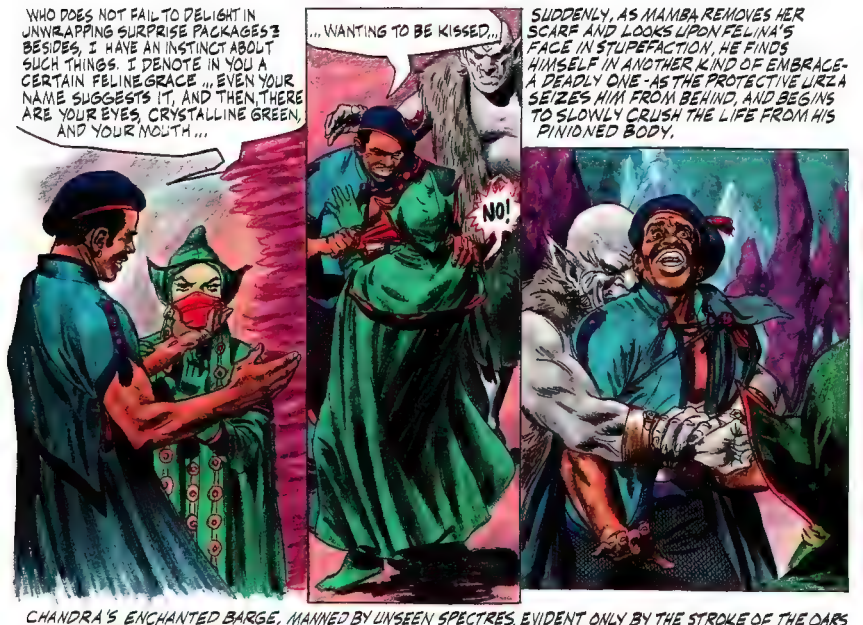
HAVING DIVINED THAT HIS QUARRY MUST BY NOW BE ENTRAPPED BY THE SORCERESS, CHANDRA, THE MALEVOLENT MAGE KNOWS THAT TO PREVAIL AGAINST HER POWERS--WHICH MAY WELL BE THE EQUAL OF HIS OWN, WILL REQUIRE SOME CRAFTY STRATAGEM. AVOIDING THE PERILOUS CLIFF TRAIL MADE DOUBLY DANGEROUS BY SANGUINARY SKATES, HE ENTERS THE CAVES HONEYCOMBING THE RIM AREA AND DESCENDS INTO THE LABYRINTHINE CAVERNS BELOW, ENCOUNTERING~~~ THE DROONS!
ALWAYS LIKE TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE!
I SEEK AUDIENCE WITH YOUR LEADER, THE ESTIMABLE DRUGA!


NORMAL ONCE, BUT LONG SINCE "CHANGED" AND BANISHED BY CHANDRA TO THEIR UNDERGROUND EXISTENCE, THE DROONS HATE ALL SURFACE PEOPLE, BUT THEY HATE HER MOST OF ALL!
I COME TO YOU AS A PHYSICIAN, MY WORTHY FRIEND, KNOWING OF YOUR PLIGHT AT THE HANDS OF THAT TREACHEROUS TART, I OFFER MY NOT INCONSEQUENTIAL ARTS TO RESTORE YOU TO YOUR PREVIOUS STATE, AND AT THE SAME TIME, ERADICATE, OBLITERATE, AND ABROGATE THIS BLIGHT, THIS BLOT ON THE ESCUTCHEON OF THE NOBLE COMMUNION OF LEGERDEMAIN-CHANDRA!
HOW MUCH!
NO, NO, MY ANGEL... YOU MISUNDERSTAND. MY LITTLE STUMP. I ASK NOTHING FOR MYSELF, MY PITHY RDOT...
I REQUIRE ONLY THAT YOU PROVIDE ME WITH AN EASY ACCESS TO HER STRONGHOLD, AND SOME DIVERSIONARY TACTIC, A MEANS TO PIERCE HER PENETRALIA WHEREBY I MAY SUBVERT THE PARAPHERNALIA THAT SUPPORTS HER--THON'S MACHINES!

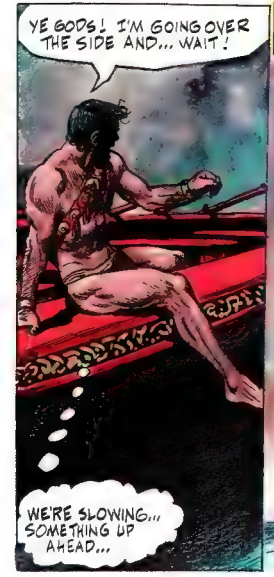
POSSIBLE. WE'VE NEVER ATTEMPTED IT BEFORE, OUT OF FEAR...CHANDRA'S VENGEANCE CAN TAKE EVEN MORE DRASTIC FORMS THAN THIS... BUT THERE IS A TUNNEL UNDER THE LAKE TO HER CASTLE CLAW.
EXCELLENT, MY STATESMANLY STALK! RALLY ROUND THE REST OF YOUR REDOUBTABLE RUTABAGA AND HEAR MY PLAN.
BETTER BE GOOD!
MEANWHILE, MAMBA AND HIS NEW COMPANIONS ARE FACED WITH THE DELICATE PROBLEM OF DECAMPMENT FROM THE CANTONMENT OF SHENDARKAN WITHOUT GIVING OFFENSE... OR EVEN NOTICE...
WE NEED A DISTRACTION, SOME GULLERY TO COVER OUR DEPARTURE- WAIT, WHERE ARE THE MAIN STORES KEPT?
THE LARGE TENT ADJACENT TO SHENDARKAN'S OWN--AND, OF COURSE, HEAVILY GUARDED!
YES, BUT BY SOTS! URZA, I NEED YOU FOR THIS. COME WITH ME.
MOMENTS LATER...
THE QUESHUN IS, M'FREN, THE QUESHUN THA' CONCERN ZUSALL IZ- WISH WAYZUP?!
HUH?
FELINA WAS RIGHT--UMPH! VERY HEAVILY GUARDED.
NOW, THERE MUST BE SOMETHING HERE THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR... SHENDARKAN'S BULLY BOYS STEAL ANYTHING... AND, BLESS ME HERE IT IS!...
...FIREWORKS!


...IN MINUTES...
QUICKLY! TO THE MOUNTS!
HA, HA, HAAAAA- RIDE, COMRADES!
...FROM ATOP A DUNE...
A DELIGHTFUL IMBROGLIO, FRIEND MAMBA! HOW DID YOU CONCEIVE IT?
HAPPENSTANCE. THOSE GYPSIES STEAL FOR THE LOVE OF STEALING! I KNEW THERE HAD TO BE SOMETHING THERE TO AID US. EXPLOSIVES HAVE, OF COURSE, BEEN OUTLAWED FOR ANY USE SINCE THE TIME OF CHAOS EXCEPT BY THE CHURCH FOR CERTAIN CELEBRATIONS-AND A GOOD THING, TOO, CONSIDERING HOW OUR ANCESTORS DECIMATED THEMSELVES IN WHOLESALE LOTS. THE NOMADS MUST HAVE RAIDED SOME MONASTERY'S CARAVAN AND UNWITTINGLY PROVIDED US WITH THE MEANS FOR A DISCREET FAREWELL.

KEEN TRACKER THAT HE IS, MAMBA SOON DISCOVERS ORION'S SPOOR, WHICH LEADS HIS PARTY TO ~~~
THE LOST SEA! AT LEAST SHENDARKAN'S SUPERSTITIOUS BRAVOS WON'T FOLLOW US HERE... PERHAPS WISELY. WHAT SAY YOU, FELINA?
LAMONTHOS SPOKE OF IT ONCE... I SEEM TO REMEMBER SOMETHING ABOUT A HYPNOTIC MIASMA- WE MUSTN'T GET TOO CLOSE... AND, YES! CAVERNS... AND THE MANDRAKE PEOPLE... THE DROONS.
ELABORATE.
THE "SEA" IS ACTUALLY A DELUDING VAPOR THAT LULLS BUT CONCEALS A TREACHEROUS DESCENT TO THE VALLEY BELOW... GUARDED BY DEADLY SKATES. BUT THERE ARE CAVERNS... TUNNELS TO THE CANYON FLOOR WHERE A MIGHTY SORCERESS REIGNS. THESE CAVES ARE THE ABODE OF... UNHUMANS, VICTIMS OF CHANDRA'S VENGEFUL DISPLEASURE. SHE PREFERS TO CONSIGN HER ENEMIES TO A LIVING DEATH RATHER THAN A FINAL ONE.
WELL, SINCE THE LIGHT OF DAY WON'T HELP US WHICHEVER WAY WE TAKE, I SUGGEST THE CAVERNS, UNLESS YOU WISH TO REST TONIGHT AND START IN THE MORNING?
AND HAVE YOU SNEAKING OFF IN THE DARK TO GET TO LAMONTHOS BEFORE ME? I THINK NOT.
TSK! TSK! YOU WOMEN ARE ALL ALIKE. ANY PLOY JUST TO HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME. VERY WELL, SHARE MY BLANKET UNDER THE LIGHT OF THE MOON AND KNOW WHERE I AM ALL NIGHT.
HA-! WOULD YOU BID ON A PARCEL WITHOUT SEEING WHAT LIES BENEATH THE WRAPPING?


WHO DOES NOT FAIL TO DELIGHT IN UNWRAPPING SURPRISE PACKAGES? BESIDES, I HAVE AN INSTINCT ABOUT SUCH THINGS. I DENOTE IN YOU A CERTAIN FELINE GRACE ... EVEN YOUR NAME SUGGESTS IT, AND THEN, THERE ARE YOUR EYES, CRYSTALLINE GREEN, AND YOUR MOUTH ...
... WANTING TO BE KISSED ...
NO!
SUDDENLY, AS MAMBA REMOVES HER SCARF AND LOOKS UPON FELINA'S FACE IN STUPEFACTION, HE FINDS HIMSELF IN ANOTHER KIND OF EMBRACE- A DEADLY ONE - AS THE PROTECTIVE URZA SEIZES HIM FROM BEHIND, AND BEGINS TO SLOWLY CRUSH THE LIFE FROM HIS PINIONED BODY.

CHANDRA'S ENCHANTED BARGE, MANNED BY UNSEEN SPECTRES, EVIDENT ONLY BY THE STROKE OF THE OARS AND THE RYTHMIC BASS CHANTING ACCOMPANYING THEM... AND ALSO PERHAPS, THE UPRIGHT HAIRS ON THE NAPE OF ORION'S NECK, GLIDES EERILY ACROSS THE FOG-FESTOONED LAKE.

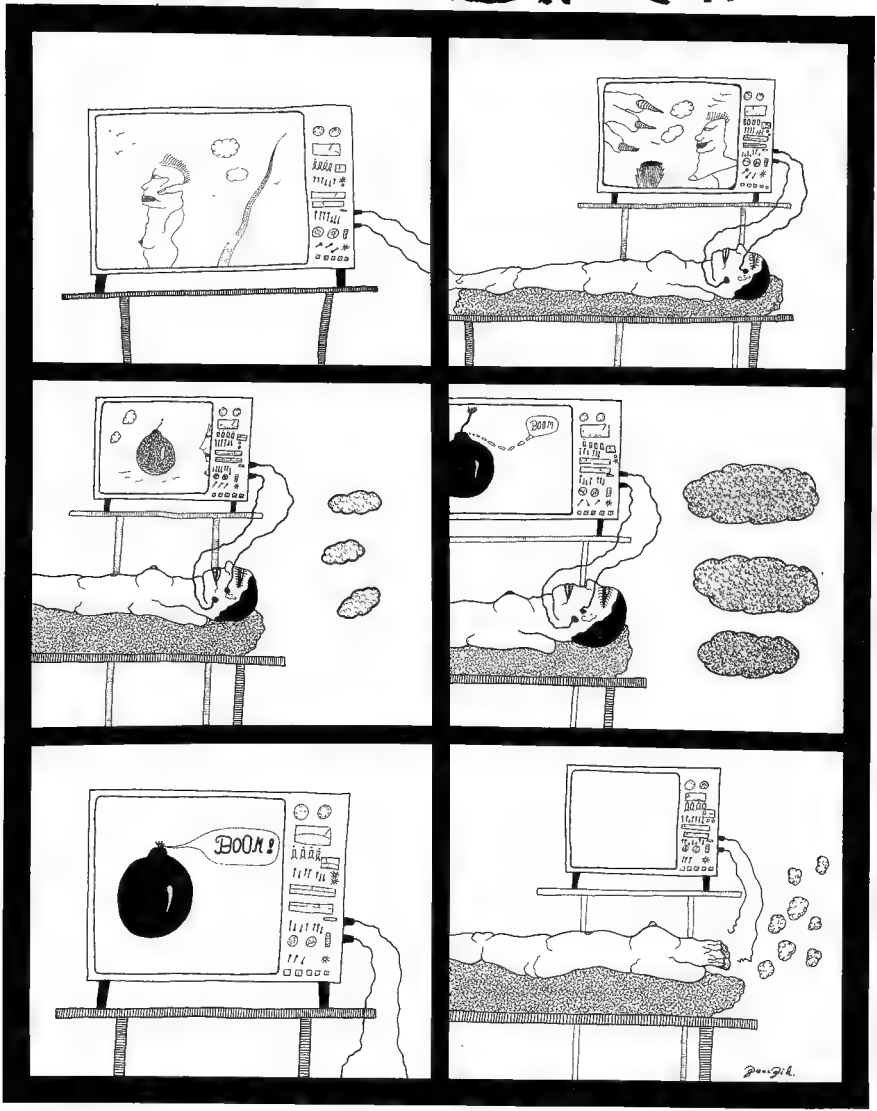


ORION'S LANDFALL IS GREETED BY A HOST OF ONE... A SILENT, GROTESQUE CREATURE, WHO PROVIDES BIZARRE TRANSPORT TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATION, CHANDRA'S OUTRÉ DOMICILE...

...CASTLE CLAW.
FIVE TOWERS HEWN RIGHT OUT OF A MOUNTAIN- SHOULD MAKE A SORCERESS FEEL VERY MUCH AT HOME...
CHANDRA WELCOMES YOU, MASTER ORION. YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR A CELEBRATION- A MASQUERADE BALL, IN YOUR HONOR.
INDEED?! FLAWLESS TIMING...BUT I DO NOT WISH TO MEET ANY MORE SHADES, VISIONS, OR BEASTIES, AS I'VE ENCOUNTERED THUS FAR IN YOUR... QUAINT... VALLEY, FAIR LADY.
THE GAY REVELERS SEEM CURIOUSLY ANIMATED IN AN ARTIFICIAL WAY. WELL AWARE THAT HE HAS BEEN DRAGOONED, ORION DECIDES TO BIDE HIS TIME. PERSUADED TO ASSUAGE THE RAVAGES OF HIS HARSH JOURNEY BEFORE JOINING THE FETE, HE ALLOWS HIMSELF TO BE...
OF COURSE, MY GALLANT, BUT THE ATTENDANCE IS QUITE ORDINARY, I ASSURE YOU. YOU WILL WANT TO REFRESH YOURSELF BEFORE JOINING US AS GUEST OF HONOR. HELA WILL ATTEND YOU. DO NOT FEAR, SHE SEEMS QUITE NORMAL, DOES SHE NOT?
HMMM.... LOVELY. ...BUT NOT AS LOVELY AS YOURSELF, WITCH. IT WILL BE A SHAME WHEN I PROBABLY HAVE TO KILL YOU.
33

...LED TO SUMPTUOUS CHAMBERS- AND ATTENDED TO.
DAMN! A BATH! NOW IF I ONLY HAD A DRAM OF SOME ESSENCE ...
...AH, DELIGHTFUL! NOW.... DAMN ME IF IT ISN'T SO ROOMY, I'M LONESOME IN HERE! IF I ONLY HAD SOMEONE TO SCRUB MY BRAWNY BACK...
...CAN'T FAULT CHANDRA'S HOSPITALITY, BLESS HER--WITCH OR NOT! NOW, MY DEAR, IF YOU'D JUST SCRUB A BIT LOWER-YOU'D DISCOVER HOW MUCH YOU'VE ALREADY RAISED MY SPIRITS-DON'T BE SHY, LITTLE FAWN, I... HMMM...ACCOMMODATING, BUT LISTLESS...OR...
LIFELESS IS THE WORD YOU'RE GROPING FOR, ORION!
WHAT!? ...WHO GROPES- ER, WHO GOES THERE?!
I REGRET INTERRUPTING YOUR-- ABLUTIONS, SIR, BUT IF YOU WISH TO AVOID BECOMING AS LIFELESS AS YOUR HANDMAIDENS, YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE-NOW!!
WITHOUT FINISHING MY DRAUGHT? ATTIRED ONLY IN SCENTED LATHER?!
I IMPLORE YOU... WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT, ORION- DECORUM- OR YOUR VERY LIFE?!!
TO BE CONTINUED..

GEORGIK...



COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

HM #1/APRIL, 1977: With Space Punks, the first chapters of Corben's Den and Bode's Sunpot, an excerpt from the best-selling fantasy novel *The Sword of Shannara*, Harzak, and more ($5.00)

HM #2/MAY, 1977: Introducing Roger, the paranoid puppet, Virgo, the cosmic maiden, Russian astronauts, Conquering Armies, the ultimate rock festival, while Harzak, Sunpot, and Den continue ($4.00)

HM #3/JUNE, 1977: Features *Night Images*, poetry by Conan's creator, Robert E. Howard, with illustrations by Corben, Macedo's Rockblitz, the highly praised Shells, the first chapter of Davis's World Apart, more Den, Sunpot, and Harzak ($3.00)

HM #4/JULY, 1977: Is a must for Moebius fans, with 12 pages of Harzak and his s/f spy saga, The Long Tomorrow, also the end of Sunpot, further adventures of Den, the psychic Nep Simo, and the horrible Gold Queen ($3.00)

HM #5/AUGUST, 1977: In which the saga of Polonius begins, The Long Tomorrow concludes, World Apart and Den continue, all amidst talking plants, samurai, puppets, sex, and violence ($3.00)

HM #6/SEPTEMBER, 1977: Galactic Aztecs, cosmic cowboys, hysterical shrubbery, chemically-induced sanity, a Moebius space opera, more World Apart, Den, and Polonius, plus a Roger Zelazny short story. ($3.00)

HM #7/OCTOBER, 1977: Packed with knights, ladies, jet pilots, insanity, reincarnation, and other harmless pastimes, 10 pages of color Moebius, the Airtight Garage, Den, and Polonius *redux*, and fiction by Theodore Sturgeon ($3.00)

HM #8/NOVEMBER, 1977: With nine color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud, the conclusions of both Polonius and World Apart, expugs, intellectual mollusks, birth and death stars, and a great new Harlan Ellison story—the heaviest *Heavy Metal* yet! ($3.00)

HM #9/DECEMBER, 1977: This time, went up to 104 pages to bring you the complete saga of Druillet's anti-hero, Vuzz, a chapter from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and Fortune's Fool by Chaykin and Wein, in addition to full-color contributions from regulars Corben, Macedo, Claveloux, and Moebius ($3.00)

HM #10/JANUARY, 1978: We got Morrow to illustrate Zelazny, we got Lob and Pichard to update Ulysses, we got Meehan to do a *Heavy Metal* calendar girl, we concluded Conquering Armies, and continued Den. Of course, you *know* about the Incas, fog lights, and the time warp ($2.00)

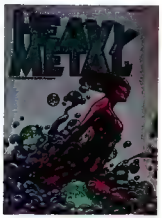
HM #11/FEBRUARY, 1978: Wherein begin the new adventures of Barbarella, naked to her enemies and nude to her friends, and of Urm the Fool in his quest for revenge. Wraparound cover and center spread by Nino. A trip to Venus, the Crusader and the Witch, and Moebius down the rabbit hole. With the usual unusual, like Den ($2.00)

HM #12/MARCH, 1978: In which we learn the evils of witch-hunts and the perils of witchcraft, the problems of mass transit, and the dangers of hitchhiking. Plus, the first swashbuckling episode of Orion. More Barbarella. More Urm. And still more Den ($2.00)

HM #13/APRIL, 1978: Big deal first anniversary issue, with 30-page insert from Paradise 9 by all concerned. Also, amidst the king must die, death's duel, and the undead, Barbarella gives birth. Oh, and the sexual acrobatic epilogue to Den ($2 00)

HM #14/MAY, 1978: Does in Urm the Mad, locates El Dorado, goes to pieces on a bicycle, buys a cannibal clock, time-travels, and cerebrally tap-dances with Nino. Not to mention Orion and Barbarella. ($2.00)

HM #15/JUNE 1978: This time, we go too far. For instance, the exotic new Corben, Shahrazad, the neurotic, Evolution, the ecstatic More Than Human, the erotic Barbarella, and the eratic Them Changes. And an excerpt from Sabre, and the origins of Heilman. ($2 00)



HM #16/JULY, 1978: A happy ending to Barbarella, a sad ending to 1996, the resumption of Druillet's Gall, the further adventures of Heilman and Orion, More Than Human cont'd, and another piece of the Arabian Nights tale from Corben ($2 00)

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HEAVY METAL

GALACTIC GEOGRAPHIC

NEW EVIDENCE OF LIFE IN THE VOID

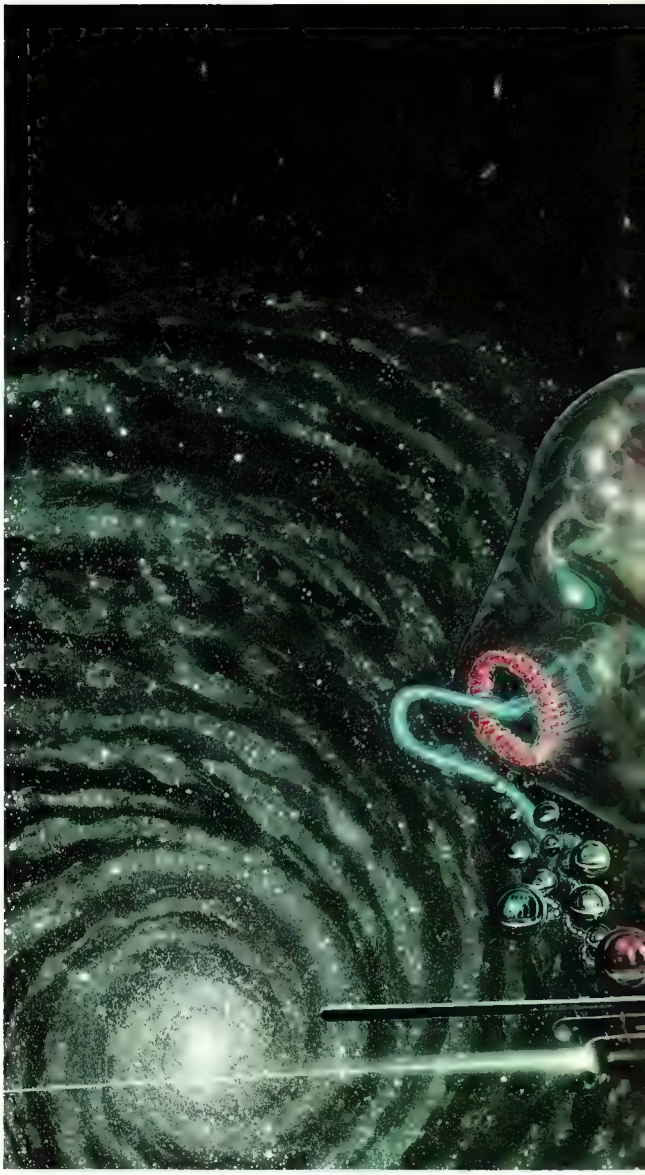
An alien life form appears where none should be in this photogram transmitted by the experimental deep space probe *Wisniewski*, the first manned Federation vehicle to explore intergalactic space.

An automatic camera aboard the *Wisniewski*, placed to record the functions of the still experimental tachyon transmitter (seen in foreground), was photographing our Milky Way from this unprecedented vantage point when it recorded a phenomenon that stunned the Federation worlds. A technician working on the communicator witnessed the event and later gave this account: "I was preparing to pull the tachyon boom back into the ship to adjust the transmitter and was waiting for a clearlight when I noticed through the port that the unit was discharging brightly. Past it, far away, I saw a light coming toward us. I was startled because you rarely see moving things in space, especially where we were. By the time I'd reported what I was seeing, the light had stopped advancing and was hanging in space about a kilometer away. It wasn't a rigid form, but more like a liquid globule or a single-celled organism that undulated and pulsed with spectral light. Then a strand of bubbles on a tether shot out of the main globule toward me, so quickly that I recoiled. The leading bubble on the end of the tether stopped suddenly a few meters from the sputtering tachyon boom and hung there. I could see something moving in the bubble. It made a quick, twisting move that caused an opening to appear in its side. From the opening came an appendage that produced small colored globules, like eyes, that floated for a few seconds examining the transmitter. Then it drew away and was gone."

Scientists examining the image scan tapes from which this color scan was made have suggested that the alien craft seems to be composed of biological and technological parts integrated as in a symbiotic organism. The main body emitted spectral pulses of light and seemed to contain an assortment of large organic modules, perhaps specialized organic groups assigned to a purpose—in this case, a spacecraft.

Hu T. M. White, famed Tseilarol biomapper, observed that the image is a sober reminder of the regions science has yet to understand. "Federation scientists gloated over tachyon drive and its counterpart, the tach-communicator, heralding them as a conquest over infinity and the forces of nature. But before us here, in the void between the galaxies with infinity itself as a background, our sputtering transmitter is scrutinized by an entity whose presence alone mutely testifies to our limits of understanding."

From the *Stellar Journals of Karl Kofoed*



So, you've always wanted to be a member of baseball's most exciting team.

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You can buy the shirt—or nine of them—for $6.00 each in large, medium, or small, plus 60 cents for postage and handling.

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PEDOJOINT'S GEARS ALL STRIPPED!
VALVULE CRACKED.. VIROLE SHOT..
THIS PEDO'S TOTALED!!

PLASTIC CRAP! NOTHING LASTS ANYMORE! I'M READY FOR THE STANDARD TRADE-IN!
AND NOW MY LOG BOOK'S NEGATIVE!
Ziii
?!
ZKT
KT
KT
ZKLT
DAMN IT TO HELL!
WHAT THE FUCK'S HAPPENING NOW?!
I GOTTA...
KLTT
ZKTT
KTT
ZKLTT
SHIT! THE DUNES!
TONK
VLKT
KLT TK

WELL WHADDYA KNOW? THIS IS REALLY A BREAK!
DAMN THIS BASTARD!
IT'S ONLY A LITTLE SQUIRT OF A "COMPACT." BUT AT LEAST I CAN USE SOME SPARE PARTS!
OH, BOY... AM I EVER FUCKED!!
BZZTT
GHH
CAREFUL!
LOOKS LIKE A DELICATELY BUILT MODEL! THE SLIGHTEST LITTLE BUMP AND THEY ARE USELESS!!

TOUGH SHIT FOR HIM! I HAVE MY NEEDS!
THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE ANY MORE USE TO HIM ANYWAY!
AND IT'S A PEDO FOR ME!
?!
CRITCH
WHAT? NOT STANDARD! IT'S BENDABLE! WHAT THE...
A BIO!
NOT A SINGLE USABLE PART HERE! A BIO!...
I'M DONE FOR...
LOG BOOK=NEGATIVE
HOMEOSTASIS=SUSPENDED
PHASE=TERMINAL
BLOODY MUTILATED MODULATOR!!
ziiiz
Kwii
Ziikr
pzii
5

...THE NEW MODELS ARE BETTER THAN THE LAST SERIES!! WELL AND GOOD... BUT!!
Tööö
Zjjjrrsss
TZjjjk
BUT WITH WHAT YOU SAY YOU LIKE, THE MATERIAL USED BEFORE THE WAR WAS SOMETHING ELSE! YOU'D NEVER HEAR A MODULO BACK FIRING LIKE THIS THEN!!
Zjjjrää
Gjjptii
BECAUSE WITHOUT A MODULO THIS LATEST MODEL ISN'T ANY MORE THAN...
?!
GTii
Zjjdzjjk
IMPOSSIBLE! A MARK II FROM THE LAST WAR!!
WHAT WAS I SAYING!!
THE STANDARD 177 FIGHTER!
IT'S DEACTIVATED
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE SEEN A MODEL WITH ALL THAT GRILLWORK!
Tii
Zii
Ptiii
Tii
Zii
ALL THE SAME...
6

SO...LET'S SEE...WHAT'S UP...
Ziiik
iii
Diii
KING
A BROKEN PEDO! THAT'S IT! ALL THE SAME, MUST HAVE BEEN VERY SOLID! INCREDIBLE THAT IT'S LASTED ALL THIS TIME!!
TiKZjii
Diiii
A BIO IN ITS PRIME!
GETTING TO SEE MORE AND MORE OF THEM!
Diiii
Zii
Itchi
FILTH...
Zii
DZiii
THEM AND THEIR MACHINES...
PROUF
TZii
COMING TO COVER OUR WORLD IN FILTH...
DZii
TZii

...THEY'RE FRAGILE, IRREPARABLE, AND IRRECOVERABLE...
THIS MODULO'S PERFECT!
Giiik
iii2
Tii
...UNPREDICTABLE AND UNPROGRAMMABLE...
I'LL PLUG IT INTO THE BY-PASS!
Dzii
WELL! NOT STANDARD ISSUE...
GOOD! CAN STILL MAKE THE CONNECTION...
THAT'S BETTER... AND THERE'S A LESSON TO BE LEARNED HERE...
WORKS PERFECTLY! NO MORE NOISE!! I'VE NEVER FELT BETTER!!
LIKE I WAS SAYING, THEY MADE BLOODY GREAT STUFF...
BEFORE THE WAR...
ALIAS
THE END

THEODORE STURGEON'S MORE THAN HUMAN

ADAPTED BY ALEX NINO AND DOUG MOENCH

Lone sensed the change before anyone else, even before Mrs. Prodd. It was a difference in the nature of one of her silences. It was a treasure-proud silence, and Lone felt it change as a man's kind of pride might change when he turned from a jewel he treasured to a green shoot he treasured. He said nothing and concluded nothing; he just knew.

So the day Prodd came down to the south meadow, where Lone was stepping and turning tirelessly, a very part of his whispering scythe, Lone knew what it was that he wanted to say.

Understanding was hardly one of his troubles any more, but niceties of expression were. He had to rehearse his tongue, still thick and unwieldy after eight years here. But suddenly, Lone found it. "Been thinking," he said. "I should go." That wasn't quite it. "Move along," he corrected. That was better. And he added, without speaking, *Because you want me to go.*

Prodd didn't hear that, of course, so he said, "Well," and he kicked a stone. "When we came here, we built Jack's—*your*—room, the room you're using. We call it Jack's room. You know why, you know who Jack is?"

Yes, Lone thought. He said nothing.

"Jack's our son. I guess it sounds funny. Jack was the little guy we were so sure about, but Jack, he . . . never got born. He's coming *now*, though. We're a bit old for it, but . . . Lone, listen to me. I don't want you to feel we're turning you out. We got a lot to thank you for . . . ."

"Said I was going—'fore you told me." *I knew.*

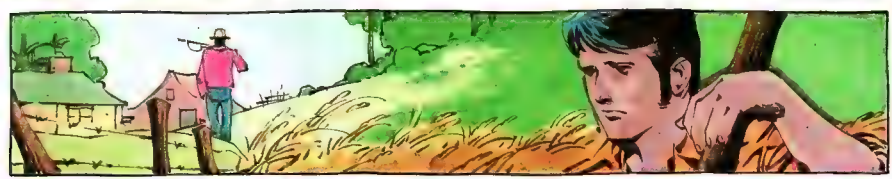
"Well . . . good then." Prodd smiled.

"Good," said Lone. "About Jack." He nodded vehemently. "Good." And he picked up the scythe.

He worked a bit, then looked after Prodd. *Walks slower than he used to*, he thought. It was true, and there were more wrinkles on Prodd's face, too.

But they were mostly from smiling. Especially these days.

Lone did not smile.



Lone's next conscious thought was, *Well, that's finished.* Cooking and warmth and work. A birthday cake. A bed. . .

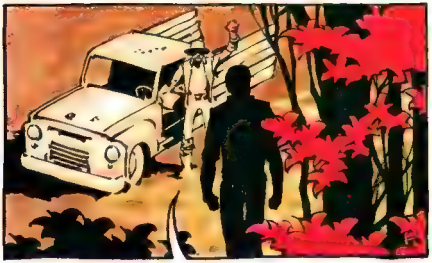
. . . and now: death-cries in the wood. Lonely hunter, solitary prey. He had been alone the whole time. Mrs. Prodd hadn't raised him; she'd been raising her Jack, and for eight years he had been wrong.

It was cold at the foot of the dwarf oak, and as dark as the chambers of a dead man's heart. Something had happened, and Janie had broken.

Little animals ran on her face. They whispered and cooed. One stroked her cheek. "*Ho-ho,*" it said.

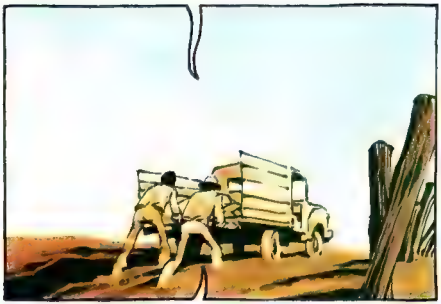
On the other side, something soft snuggled against her. It said, "*Hee-hee,*" and she put one arm around Bonnie and one around Beanie and began to cry.

Lone came back to borrow an ax. He could do just so much with his bare hands. When he came out from the woods he saw the difference in the farm. All the colors were brighter; the smells were clearer. Things were alive. Prodd looked happy. . . .



Lone! Man, I thought I wouldn't see you *again,* going off like you did. Come help me get *unstuck,* Lone-boy!

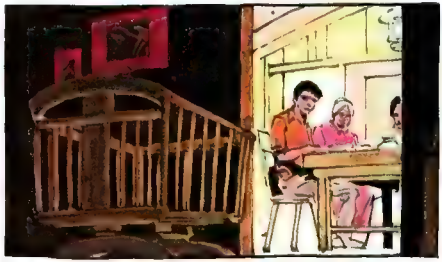
Horse dropped dead. Truck's all right, but I wish I could keep *this* from happening. Spend half my time *diggin' it out.*



You'd think that would bother me, losing the horse, but *nothing* bothers me these days. Wait'll *Ma* sees you! Had *breakfast?*

When Ma saw Lone, she hugged him hard. Something uncomfortable stirred in Lone. He wanted an ax. He thought all these other things were settled. *"You sit right down there and I'll get you some breakfast."*

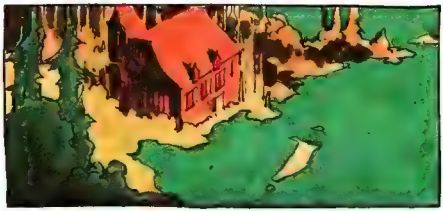
Prodd asked, *"What you doing now, Lone?"* Lone said, *"Working.Up there."* He moved his hand. *"In the woods, Lone? Doing what–trapping?"*



Lone knew he was not good with conversation, sounds, and laughter so he just said yes, ate, asked Prodd for the ax, and went out.

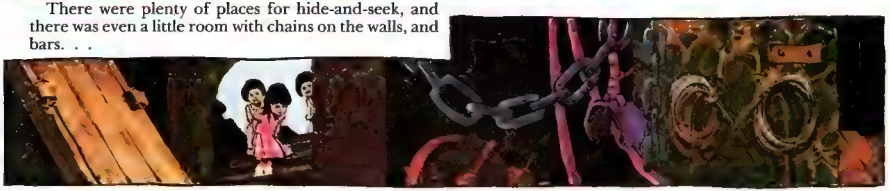
Janie read as slowly and as carefully as she could. She didn't have to read aloud, but only carefully enough so the twins could understand. She reached the part where the woman tied up the man and—*want the one with the pictures,* came the silent message. So she changed books and they were happy again.

This house was just the happiest thing of all. It was a big house on a hill with a big wall around it. Bonnie had found it. They'd had a terrible time finding some way to get Janie in, though, until Beanie fell into the brook where it went through the fence, and came up inside.

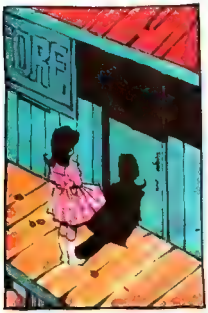


Down in the cold dark cellar rooms, they had found canned vegetables and bottles of wine, which they smashed. It tasted bad but smelled just wonderful.

There were plenty of places for hide-and-seek, and there was even a little room with chains on the walls, and bars. . .



They had been happy ever since they got here and much of the hectic time before that. They had learned that the twins could appear inside a space, like a store at night, and unlock the door from the inside when it was fastened with some kind of lock that Janie couldn't move.



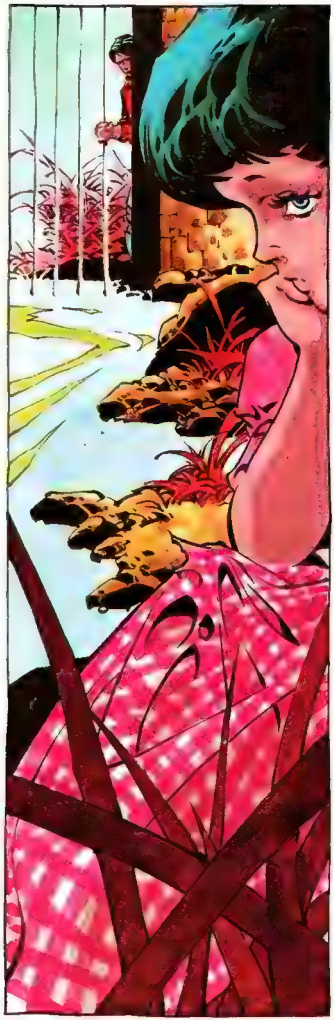
The best thing they had learned, though, was the way the twins could attract attention when someone was chasing Janie—appearing under their feet to trip them, be suddenly sitting on their shoulders,and wetting into their collars while Janie was just ordinarily running. Ho-ho.

It went much faster with the ax. Lone wanted to be able to be only what he knew he was—alone. But eight years at the farm had changed his life. He needed shelter. The more he looked at his hidden place, the more homey it seemed. At first, his work on it was primitive, but soon he had a wonderful cabin-cave. . . .

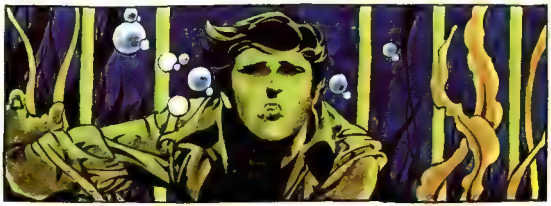
He was hunting for stones for the fireplace when an invisible something began to tug at him. He recoiled as if burned. It was sweet and needful, yes; but it was also the restimulation of a stinging lash, a crushing kick, and the greatest loss he had ever known.

For half an hour he tried to ignore the call . . . and he failed. He rose, and began to walk to the call in a dreamlike world. The longer he walked, the more irresistible the call became, the deeper his enchantment. . .

. . . and by the time he reached the clearing, he was nearly somnambulant. There was a little girl on the bank, in a torn plaid dress. She was about six. He had one moment of clear, conscious determination: to get out of this terrible place. Even as he felt this touch of reason, he heard the brook. . . .

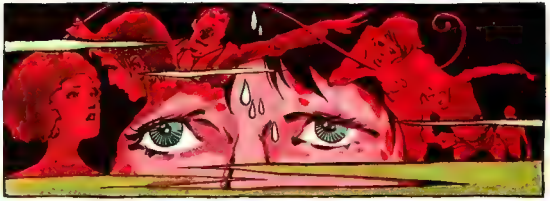


Yes, the opening was still here, and the call . . . like the one he had heard before—it was a hunger, an aloneness, a wanting. The difference was in what it wanted. It said without words that it was afraid and burdened.



It said, *Who will take care of me now?* She was looking directly at him. *"Bonnie!"* she called sharply, and he felt a great surge of relief. She did not want *him.*

Away went the restimulation. Back into the past went the whip and the bellowing, the magic and the loss—remembered still, but back where they belonged, with their raw-nerve tendrils severed so that never again could they reach into his present.

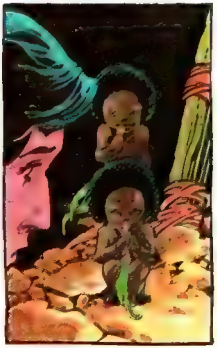


He had not known . . . he had not *known* the size of his burden! The call was no maelstrom of blood and emotion, but the aimless chunterings of a hungry brat.

He turned his back on the call, went back to his work.

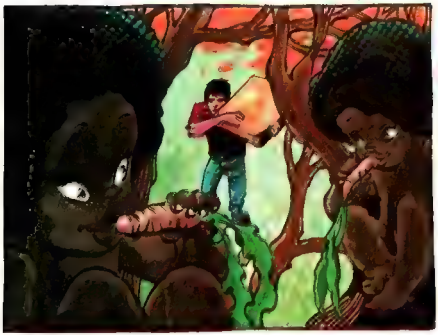
When he got back to his shelter, there was a small, naked child, about four years old, squatting in front of his door. "*Hee-hee!*" she said happily.

"*Ho-ho.*" Now there were *two* little girls.



Lone possessed an advantage; he had no impulse whatever to question his sanity, but when he reached out to grab them. . .

. . . he was astonished—a strange thing in itself, for he had seldom been interested enough in anything to be astonished. "*Ho-ho,*" and "*Hee-hee!*"



Once, years ago, he had run to catch a deer. Once he had reached up to catch a bird. Once he had plunged into a stream after a trout. *Once.*

Inside, Lone wished he had more carrots.

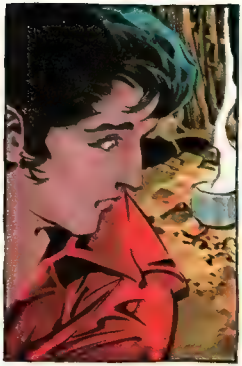
So did the little girls with the big eyes who were sometimes not there. . .

He would be crafty this time, ignoring them, letting them come closer and closer to the seething pot. . .

. . . while *he* edged closer to the door.

Then, when they fairly *drooled*. . .

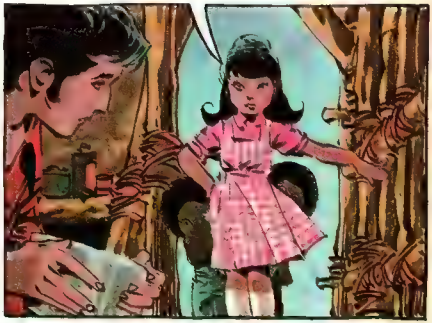
. . . they were gone.



He put on the inner bar and slowly circled the room. Nothing. He shrugged.

And at length he ate. He had reached the point of licking his fingers when a sharp knock on the door caused him to bolt upright, so utterly unexpected was it. . . .

Good evening. I was passing by and thought I would come to call. You *are* at home? You see, being good neighbors, we are willing to *share dinner* with you. . . .



Please? We're *hungry*. The stuff in the cans, it's all gone. *Please*. . .

"You're a real cheap, stingy son of a bitch. Well, we didn't want any of your old. . ." But then the girl's voice broke and they left.

He saw Mrs. Prodd. *"Now you set right down and have some breakfast."* He leapt up—

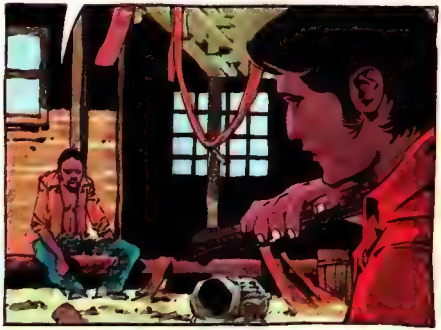
—and sent his flat, harsh voice hurtling out: *"Wait!"*

The corn should have been husked. Out in the fallow field, the truck lay forlornly, bogged. The half-door into the barn, askew and perverted amid the misery, hollowly applauded.

Have a look, Lone boy. Go right on in, have a look. Fine little feller, just fine. But Ma, she had to go off lookin' for Jack, I reckon. . . .

Too many words. Lone brought his eyes to Prodd's and found out what Prodd wanted. When he was finished he rasped, "*Mind you fix that barn door. I'll come back.*"

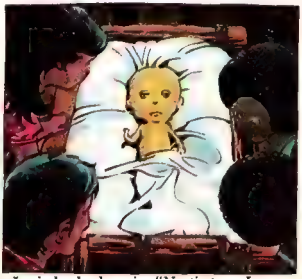
Well, Lone, boy. Corn's for husking. Ain't missed a milkin'. Sure miss that horse, though. Bothers me. Ma's gone east. Come inside the house?



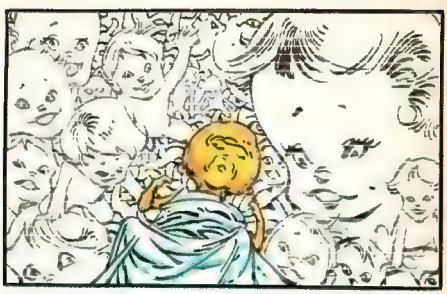
See, he's not Jack, that's the one blessing. What that in there is, that's what the doctor calls a mongoloid. Can't shovel him into the ground now, can you? That was all right for Ma, way she loved flowers and all.

The night was sun-stained by the time he got home. Janie jumped up. "*What's that? What'd you bring?*"

Lone put it down carefully. "*It's a baby,*" said Janie. "*Is it a baby?*" Lone nodded.



Janie looked again. "*Nastiest one I ever saw.*"



"You're a kidnapper," said Janie. "Know that?"

"What's a kidnapper?"

"Man that steals babies, that's what!"

"Well," said Lone, "ain't nobody going to find out. Only man knows about it, I fixed it so he's forgotten. That's the daddy. The ma, she's dead, but he don't know that either. He thinks she's back East."

The baby lay still with its dull button eyes open, breathing too loudly. Janie stood before the fire, staring thoughtfully at the stewpot. Finally she dipped into it with a ladle and dribbled the juice into a tin can. "Milk," she said while she worked. "You got to start swiping milk for him, Lone."

Janie slopped the broth on the baby's disinterested mouth. "He's getting some," Janie said optimistically.

"Maybe through his ears," said Lone, without humor.

Janie pulled at the baby's shirt and half sat him up. She frowned, then suddenly said, "Oh, maybe I can!" as if answering a comment. The twins giggled and jumped up and down.

Janie drew the tin can a few inches away from the baby's face and narrowed her eyes. The baby immediately started to choke.

"That's not quite right but I'll get it," said Janie. She spent half an hour trying. Then the baby went to sleep.

One afternoon Lone watched for a while and then prodded Janie with his toe. "What's going on there?"

She looked. "Baby's talking to them."

Lone pondered. "I used to hear babies."

Bonnie says all babies can do it, and you were a baby, weren't you?"

"What I mean is," said Lone laboriously, "when I was growed I could hear babies."

"You must've been an idiot, then," said Janie. "Idiots can't understand people but can understand babies. Bonnie told me."

"Baby's s'posed to be some kind of idiot."

"Yes, Beanie says he's different. He's like an adding machine."

"What's a *adding machine*?"

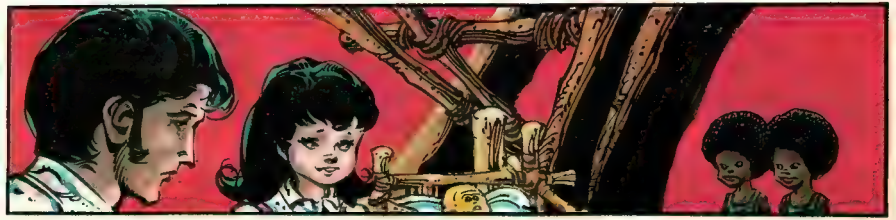
Janie exaggerated her patience. "It's a thing you push buttons and it gives you the right answer. If you have three cents and four cents, you push a button for *three* and a button for *four* and then you pull a handle. The machine tells you how many you got altogether."

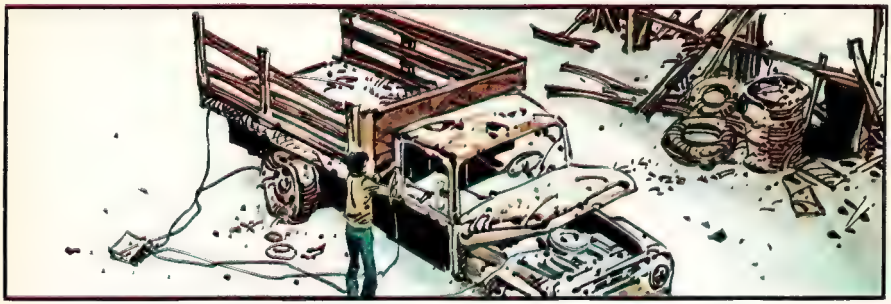
Lone sorted all this out, then waved toward the orange crate that was now Baby's bassinet. "He got no buttons."

"That was just a finger of speech," Janie said loftily. "Look, you tell Baby some things and he will put the somethings together and tell you what they come out to, just like the adding machine does with numbers. I got to tell you every little thing four times. Now listen, if you want to know something, you tell me and I'll tell Baby and he'll get the answer and tell the twins and they'll tell me and I'll tell you."

Lone sat and thought. "Suppose I got a truck," he said a half hour later. "It gets stuck in a field all the time; the ground's too tore up. Suppose I want to fix it so it won't stick no more. Baby tell me a thing like that?"

"Of course," said Janie sharply. She turned and looked at Baby. In a moment, she looked at the twins. "He says stop driving on the field and you won't get stuck. You could have thought of that yourself, you dumbhead."





Lone said, "Well, suppose you *got* to use it there, then what?"

Janie sighed. The next answer was, "Put great big wheels on it."

"Suppose you ain't got time nor money nor tools for that?"

This time it was, "Make it real heavy where the ground is hard and real light where the ground is soft."

Janie very nearly went on strike when Lone demanded to know how this could be accomplished. Lone rejected the suggestion of loading and unloading rocks. The day's impasse was reached when it was determined that there was a way, but it could be expressed only by facts not in Lone's or Janie's possession. Janie said it sounded like radio tubes and with that to go on, Lone proceeded by entering a radio service shop the next night and stealing a heavy armload of literature. For days, Janie scanned elementary electricity and radio texts, which meant nothing to her but which apparently Baby could absorb faster than she scanned.

At last the specifications were met: something which Lone could make himself, which would involve only a small knob you pushed to make the truck heavier and pulled to make it lighter—according to Baby, a *sine qua non*.

With the help of two tongue-tied infants, a mongoloid baby, and a sharp-tongued child who seemed to despise him but never failed him, Lone built the device. He did it because an old man who had taught him something he could not name was mad with bereavement and needed to work and could not afford a horse.

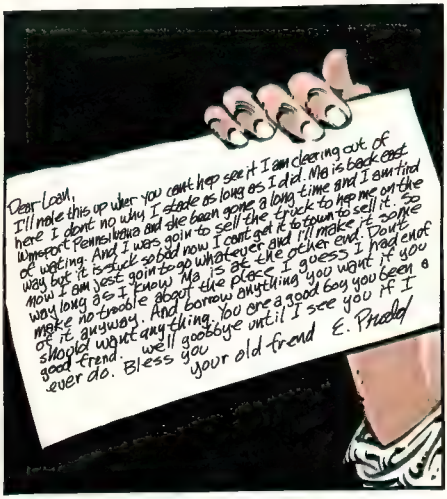
The truck stood bogged in the field. Lone unwound the device from around his neck and shoulders and began to attach it according to Baby's instructions. There wasn't much to do. Just the little box with its four silvery cables: the box clamped to steering post, and each cable leading to a corner of the frame.

He got in and pulled the knob toward him. The frame creaked as the truck seemed to raise itself on tiptoe. He pushed the knob forward. The truck settled its front axle and differential housing on solid ground with a bump that made his head rock. He scanned the other controls there, the ones that came with the truck: pedals and knobs and sticks and buttons. He sighed. He wished he had wit enough to drive a truck.

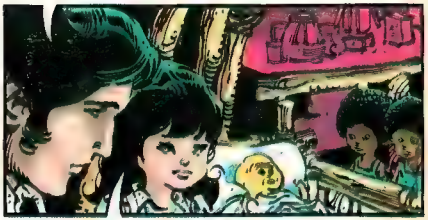
Lone got out and climbed the hill to Prodd's house. He wasn't there. The kitchen door swung in the breeze. There was a smell of mildew. Otherwise it was fairly the same as the last time he was here. The only new thing was a paper nailed to the wall by all four corners. It had writing all over it. Lone sighed. He wished he had sense enough to read.

He plunged into the forest without looking back. He never returned. The truck stood out in the sun, slowly deteriorating, slowly falling to pieces around the bright, strange silver cables. Powered by the slow release of atomic binding energy, the device was the practical solution of flight without wings, the simple key to a new era in transportation and interplanetary travel. Made by an idiot, harnessed to replace a spavined horse, stupidly left, numbly forgotten . . . earth's first anti-gravity generator. The *idiot*!

Lone made Janie read the letter four times in a three-week period. He had believed that Prodd was his only contact with anything outside himself, and that the children were merely fellow occupants of a slag dump at the edge of mankind. The loss of Prodd was the loss of life itself. At the very least, it was the loss of everything conscious.


Dear Losh,
I'll make this up wher you cant hep see it I am clearing out of here I dont no why I stade as long as I did. Ma is back east Wimport Pennsylvania and she been gone a long time and I am tird of waiting. And I wes goin to sell the trick to hep me on the way but it is sick so bad now I cant get it to town to sell it. So now I am jest goin to go whatever it is at the other end. Dont make no trooble about the place I guess I had enof of it anyway. And borrow anything you want if you should want anything. You are a good boy you been a good frend. well goobye until I see you If I ever do. Bless you
your old frend E. Prodd

Ask Baby what is a friend.



He says it's somebody who goes on loving you whether he likes you or not.

But then, Prodd and his wife had shucked him off when he was in the way. You can't say you're a part of anything, anybody, that feels free to do that to you. But friends . . . maybe they just didn't like him for a while; maybe they loved him all the way through. "Ask Baby if you can be truly part of someone you love."

"He says only if you love yourself."

His bench mark, his goal point, had for years been that thing which happened to him on the bank of the pool. If he could understand that, he was sure he could understand everything. Because for a second there was this *other*, and himself, and a flow between them without guards or screens or barriers—no language to stumble over, no ideas to misunderstand, nothing at all but a merging. What had he been then? What was it Janie had said? Idiot. An idiot.

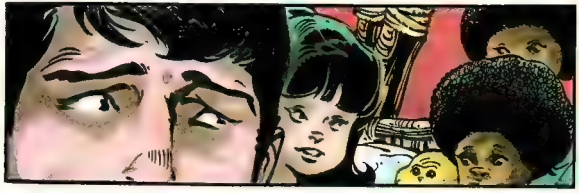
An idiot, she had said, was a grown person who could hear only babies' silent speech. Then . . . what was the creature with whom he had merged? "Ask Baby what is a grown person who can *talk* like babies."

"He says, an *innocent*."

He had been an idiot who could hear the soundless murmur. She had been an innocent who, as an adult, could speak it. "Ask Baby what if an idiot and an innocent are close together?"

"He says when they so much as touched, the innocent would stop being an innocent and the idiot would stop being an idiot." Lone thought: then what's so beautiful about being an innocent? The answer came: *It's the waiting that's beautiful.*

Waiting for the end of innocence—and an idiot is waiting for the end of idiocy, too. So each ends in their meeting! *What am I doing?* he thought wildly. *Trying to find out what I am and what I belong to . . .* is this another aspect of being *. . . different*?



"Ask Baby what kind of people are constantly trying to find out what they are and what they belong to."

"He says, *every* kind."

"What kind," Lone whispered, "am *I*?" A minute later he roared, "*What kind?*"

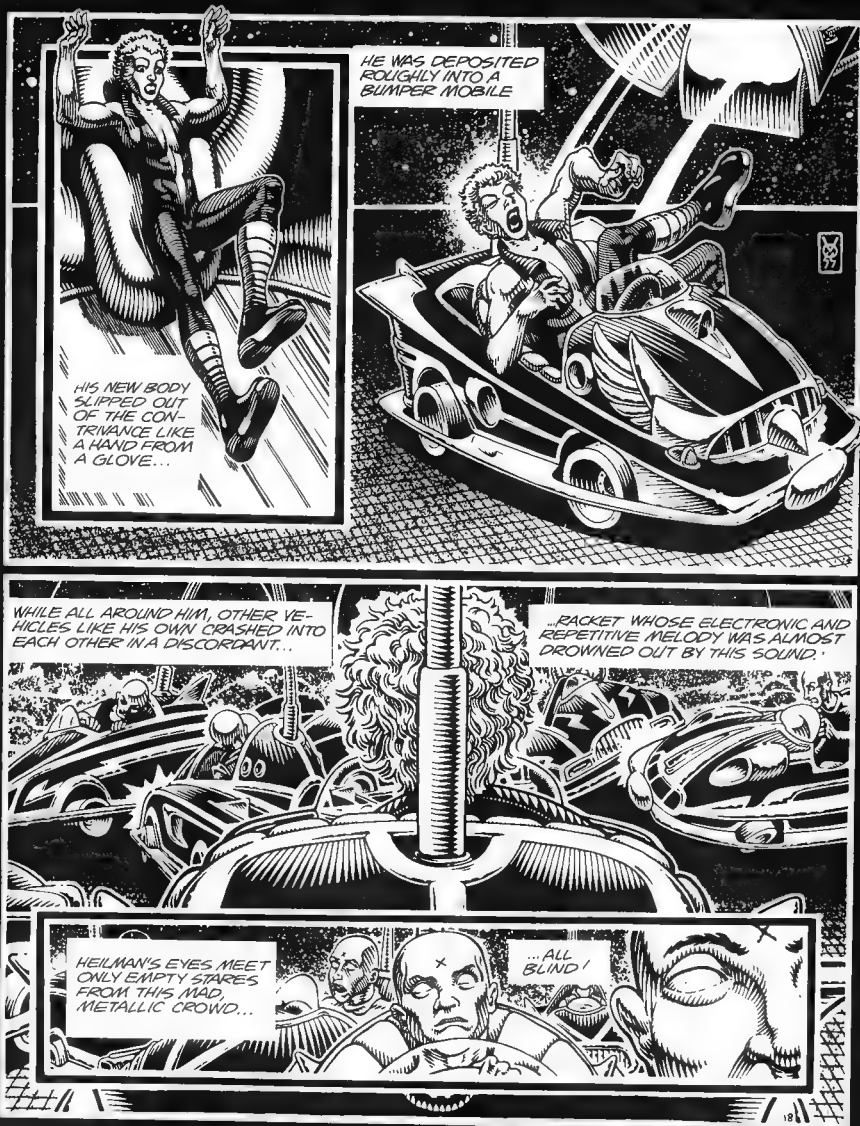
"Shut up. He doesn't have a way to . . . *wait*. He says he is a figure-outer brain and I am a body and the twins are arms and legs and you are the head. He says the 'I' is all of us."

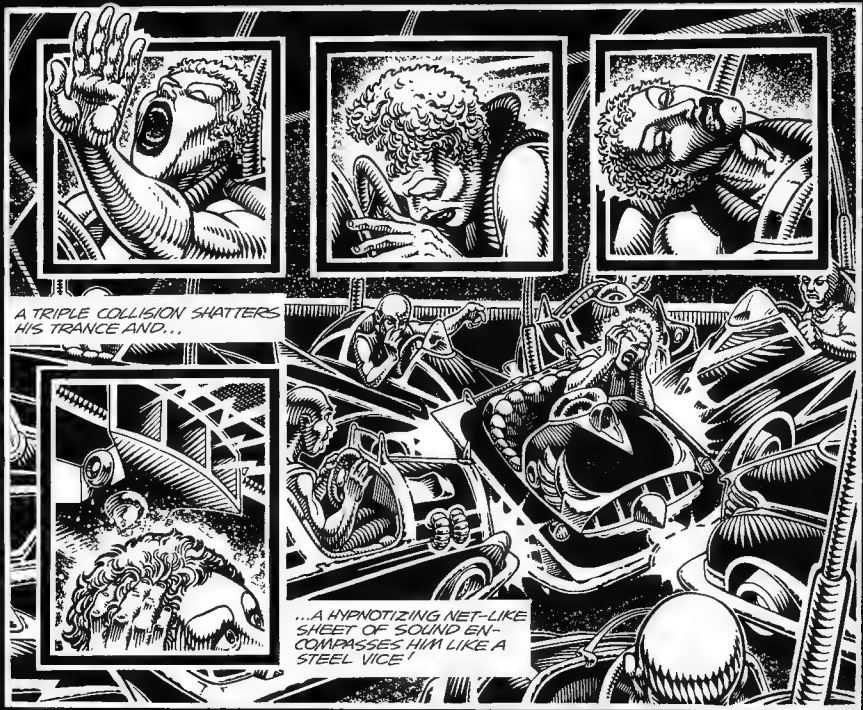
Lone thought his heart would burst. "I belong! Part of you, you, and you, too! And we'll grow! We just got born!"

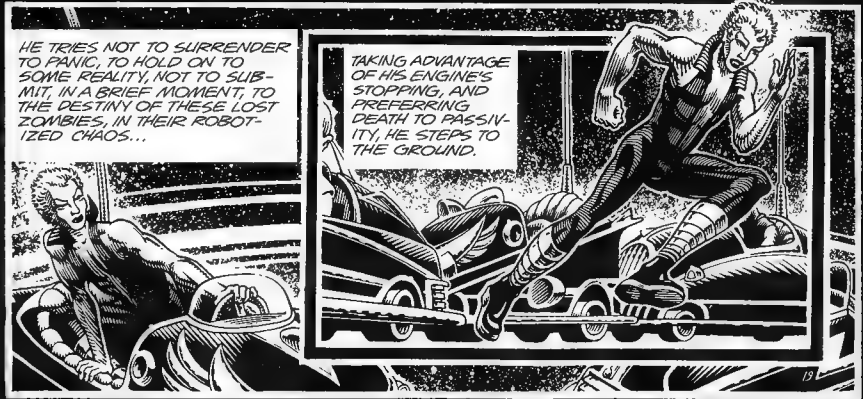
"He says not on your life. Not with a head like that. We can do practically *anything*, but we most likely won't. He says we're a thing, all right, but the thing is an idiot."

The End

HEILMAN
PROJECTED ONCE MORE INTO THE NO-MAN'S-LAND OF DEATH...
...HEILMAN QUICKLY FORGETS THE SORROWS OF HIS PREVIOUS INCARNATION AND SEARCHES FOR A DIRECTION, A GUIDING LIGHT IN THE VOID...
BUT BEFORE HE COULD FIND A PLACE IN THE COSMOS, HE WAS SUCKED IN BY...
LUNA
A GIANT UMBILICAL CORD CONNECTED TO A STRANGE PLATFORM.


HIS NEW BODY SLIPPED OUT OF THE CONTRIVANCE LIKE A HAND FROM A GLOVE...
HE WAS DEPOSITED ROUGHLY INTO A BUMPER MOBILE
WHILE ALL AROUND HIM, OTHER VEHICLES LIKE HIS OWN CRASHED INTO EACH OTHER IN A DISCORDANT...
...RACKET WHOSE ELECTRONIC AND REPETITIVE MELODY WAS ALMOST DROWNED OUT BY THIS SOUND.
HEILMAN'S EYES MEET ONLY EMPTY STARES FROM THIS MAD, METALLIC CROWD...
...ALL BLIND!

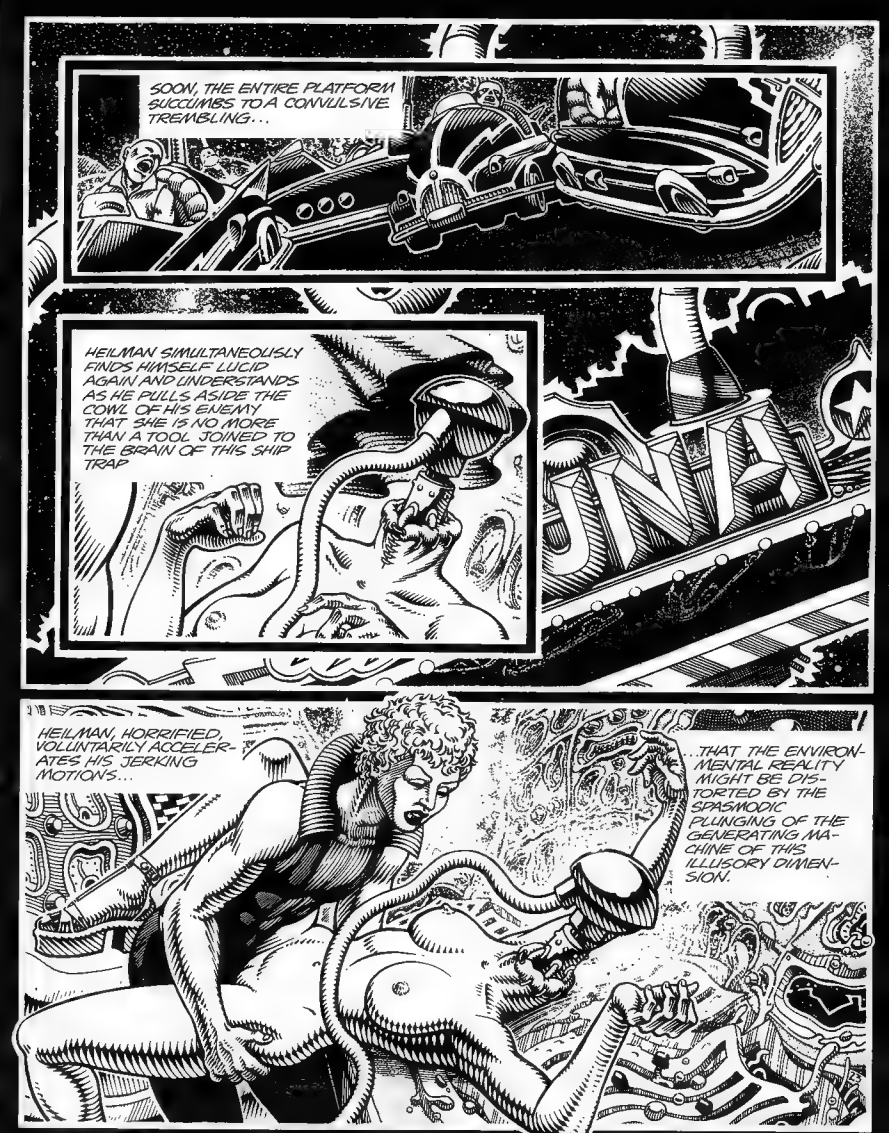

A TRIPLE COLLISION SHATTERS HIS TRANCE AND...
...A HYPNOTIZING NET-LIKE SHEET OF SOUND ENCOMPASSES HIM LIKE A STEEL VICE!

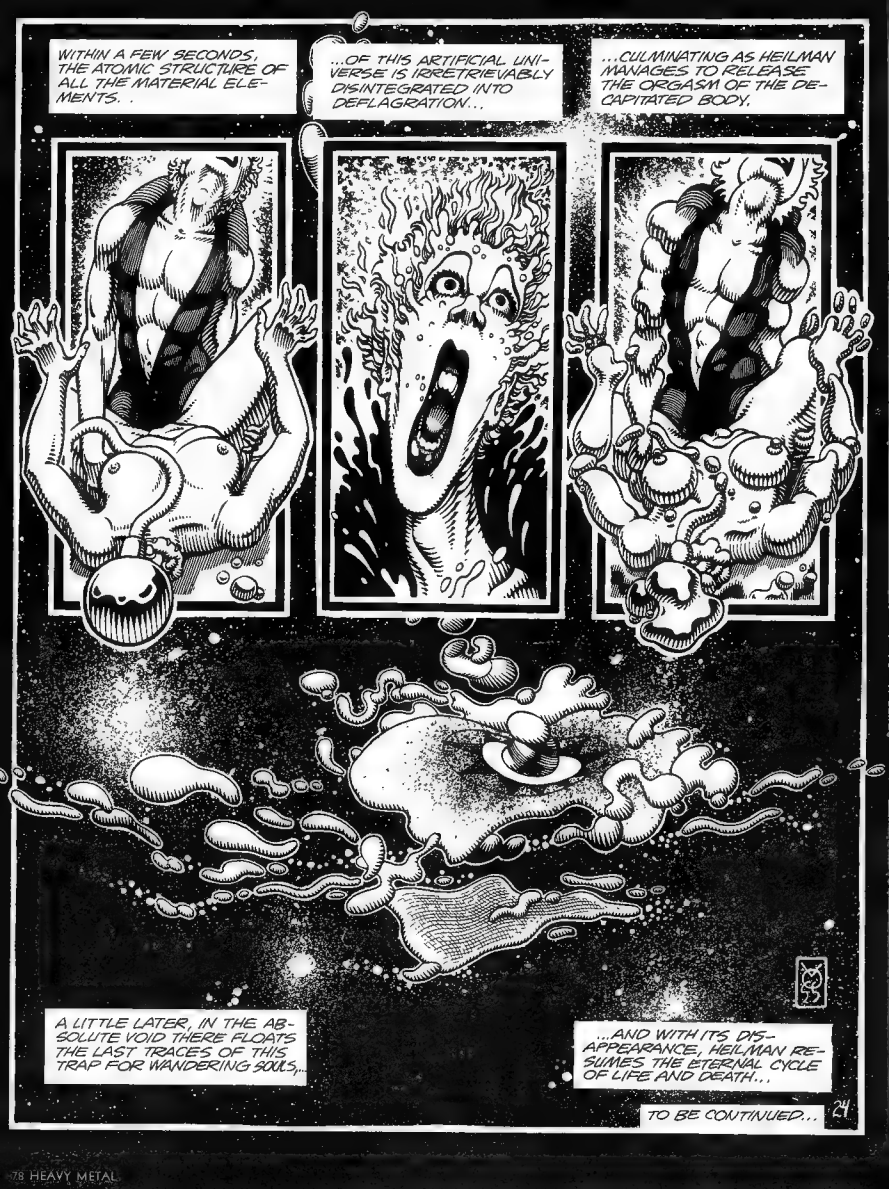

HE TRIES NOT TO SURRENDER TO PANIC, TO HOLD ON TO SOME REALITY, NOT TO SUBMIT, IN A BRIEF MOMENT, TO THE DESTINY OF THESE LOST ZOMBIES, IN THEIR ROBOTIZED CHAOS...
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF HIS ENGINE'S STOPPING, AND PREFERRING DEATH TO PASSIVITY, HE STEPS TO THE GROUND.

...AND ENDS UP FINDING A TRAP DOOR INTO WHICH HE LEAPS...
BOUNDING OVER AND DUCKING THE CHROME METEORS, HE SEARCHES FOR A DOOR, A PASSAGE, AN EXIT...
LUNA
UNDER THE PLATFORM, A MECHANICAL CREATURE WATCHES HIM ENTER WITH A MATHEMATICAL EYE...
AND DECIDES TO INTERFERE...
20

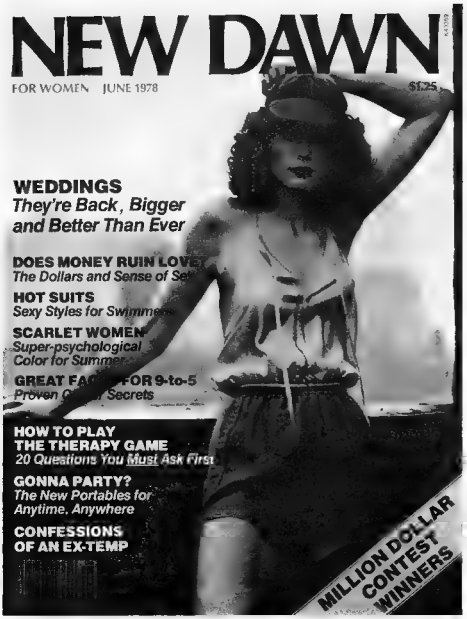
...IT SEIZES HEILMAN'S WRISTS AND CONCENTRATES A POWERFUL ELECTRIC DISCHARGE ON HIM...
BUT HE MANAGES TO ABSORB ALL THE FORCE BY INVERTING IT INTO HIS OWN POLARITY AND BY FOLLOWING THE INNER MOLECULAR REACTIONS...
AND HE DEFEATS THIS ENERGETIC POWER...
THE ROBOT COLLAPSES, INERT AT HEILMAN'S FEET. HE CANNOT COORDINATE A SINGLE MOVEMENT, DAZED AS HE IS BY THE TINGLING FLASH EMANATING FROM WITHIN HIM...
A LONG SYNTHETIC TENTACLE WRAPS ITSELF AROUND HIM TO...

...WHO ORDERS HIM TO CONNECT HIMSELF TO A MACHINE BY WHICH HE MIGHT EJACULATE THE EXCESS ENERGY WHICH NOW PREVENTS HER FROM DOMINATING HIS BODY.
...DRAW HIM TOWARD THE MISTRESS OF THE DOMAIN...
BUT, OBEYING AN INSTINCTIVE URGE, HE OVERCOMES HIS TEMPORARY PARALYSIS...
AND SCARCELY NOTICES THE VIRGINITY OF THE DOOR HE FORCES
THE VIBRATION OF THE BODY WHICH HE IMPALES AMPLIFIES QUICKLY...
...AND SEEMS TO TRANSMIT ITSELF TO THE SURROUNDING OBJECTS.


SOON, THE ENTIRE PLATFORM SUCCUMBS TO A CONVULSIVE TREMBLING...
HEILMAN SIMULTANEOUSLY FINDS HIMSELF LUCID AGAIN, AND UNDERSTANDS AS HE PULLS ASIDE THE COWL OF HIS ENEMY THAT SHE IS NO MORE THAN A TOOL JOINED TO THE BRAIN OF THIS SHIP TRAP
HEILMAN, HORRIFIED, VOLUNTARILY ACCELERATES HIS JERKING MOTIONS...
...THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL REALITY MIGHT BE DISTORTED BY THE SPASMODIC PLUNGING OF THE GENERATING MACHINE OF THIS ILLUSORY DIMENSION.


WITHIN A FEW SECONDS, THE ATOMIC STRUCTURE OF ALL THE MATERIAL ELEMENTS. .
...OF THIS ARTIFICIAL UNIVERSE IS IRRETRIEVABLY DISINTEGRATED INTO DEFLAGRATION..
...CULMINATING AS HEILMAN MANAGES TO RELEASE THE ORGASM OF THE DECAPITATED BODY.
A LITTLE LATER, IN THE ABSOLUTE VOID THERE FLOATS THE LAST TRACES OF THIS TRAP FOR WANDERING SOULS,..
...AND WITH ITS DISAPPEARANCE, HEILMAN RESUMES THE ETERNAL CYCLE OF LIFE AND DEATH..,
TO BE CONTINUED...
24

REACH FOR IT
NEW DAWN FOR THE NEW YOU



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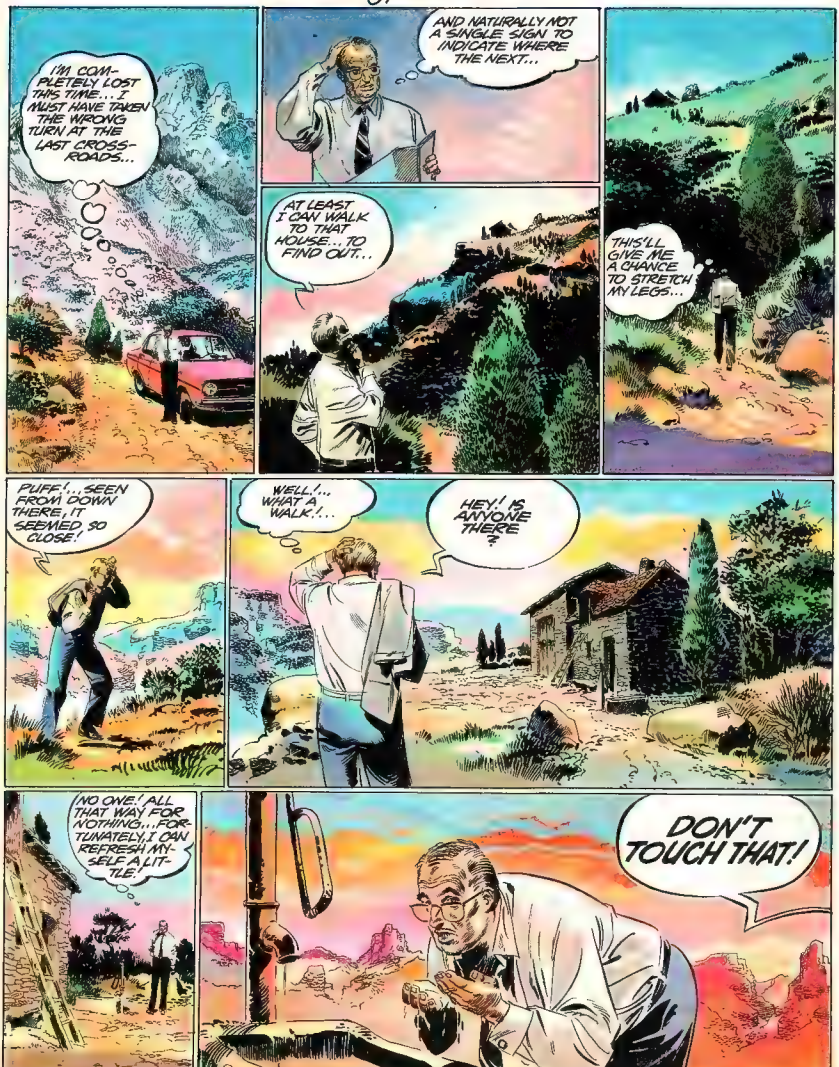
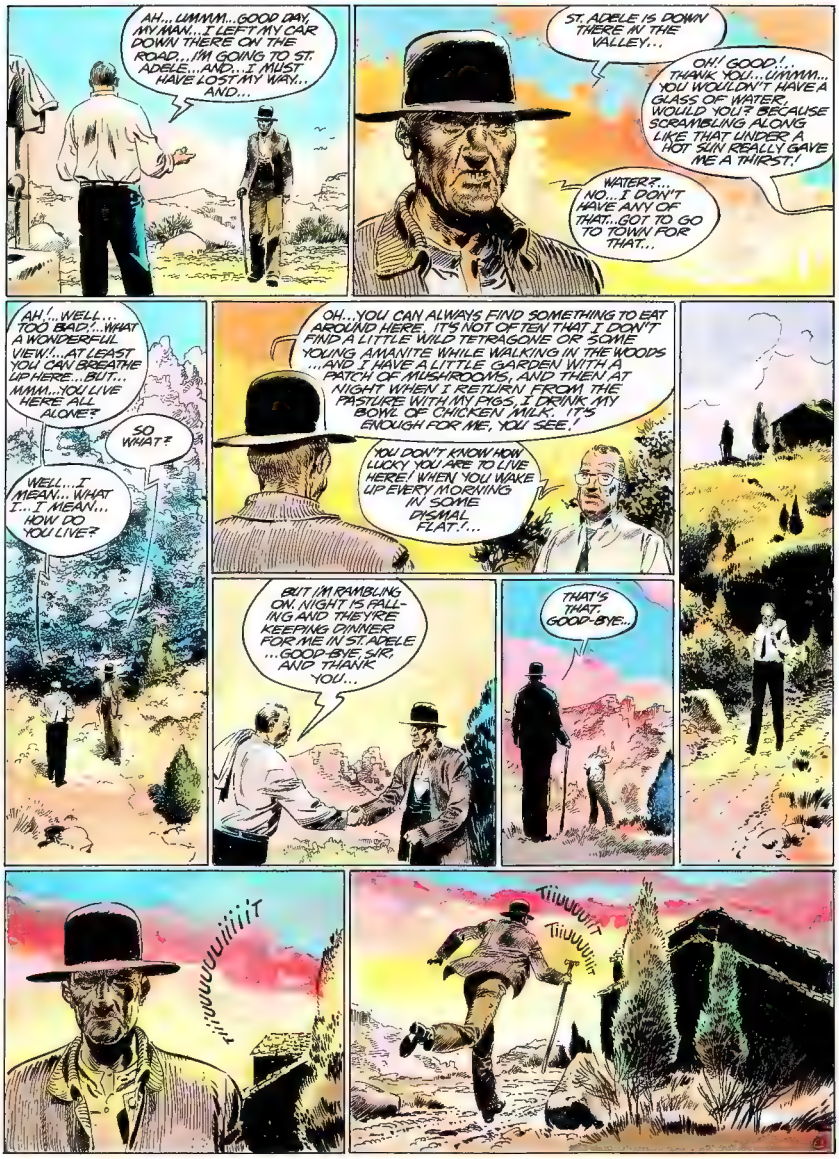
PEACEFUL IN THE COUNTRY

by Alexis


I'M COMPLETELY LOST THIS TIME... I MUST HAVE TAKEN THE WRONG TURN AT THE LAST CROSSROADS...
AND NATURALLY NOT A SINGLE SIGN TO INDICATE WHERE THE NEXT...
AT LEAST I CAN WALK TO THAT HOUSE... TO FIND OUT...
THIS'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO STRETCH MY LEGS...
PUFF!... SEEN FROM DOWN THERE, IT SEEMED SO CLOSE!
WELL!... WHAT A WALK!...
HEY! IS ANYONE THERE?
NO ONE! ALL THAT WAY FOR NOTHING... FORTUNATELY, I CAN REFRESH MYSELF A LITTLE!
DON'T TOUCH THAT!


AH... UMMM... GOOD DAY, MY MAN... I LEFT MY CAR DOWN THERE ON THE ROAD... I'M GOING TO ST. ADELE... AND... I MUST HAVE LOST MY WAY... AND...
ST. ADELE IS DOWN THERE IN THE VALLEY...
OH! GOOD!, THANK YOU... UMMM... YOU WOULDN'T HAVE A GLASS OF WATER, WOULD YOU? BECAUSE SCRAMBLING ALONG LIKE THAT UNDER A HOT SUN, REALLY GAVE ME A THIRST!
WATER?... NO... I DON'T HAVE ANY OF THAT... GOT TO GO TO TOWN FOR THAT...
AH!... WELL... TOO BAD!... WHAT A WONDERFUL VIEW!... AT LEAST YOU CAN BREATHE UP HERE... BUT... MMM... YOU LIVE HERE ALL ALONE?
SO WHAT?
WELL... I MEAN... WHAT I... I MEAN... HOW DO YOU LIVE?
OH... YOU CAN ALWAYS FIND SOMETHING TO EAT AROUND HERE. IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT I DON'T FIND A LITTLE WILD TETRAGONE OR SOME YOUNG AMANITE WHILE WALKING IN THE WOODS ... AND I HAVE A LITTLE GARDEN WITH A PATCH OF MUSHROOMS, AND THEN, AT NIGHT WHEN I RETURN FROM THE PASTURE WITH MY PIGS, I DRINK MY BOWL OF CHICKEN MILK. IT'S ENOUGH FOR ME, YOU SEE!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LUCKY YOU ARE TO LIVE HERE! WHEN YOU WAKE UP EVERY MORNING IN SOME DISMAL FLAT!...
BUT I'M RAMBLING ON. NIGHT IS FALLING AND THEY'RE KEEPING DINNER FOR ME IN ST. ADELE. ... GOOD-BYE, SIR, AND THANK YOU...
THAT'S THAT. GOOD-BYE..
TIIIUUUUIIIT
TIIIUUUUIIIT
TIIIUUUUIIIT

TIIIUUUUIIIII
HELLO!...HELLO? HEOTTEMTTOE 7HI2 HERE... I'M LISTEN-ING.!
HEOTTEMTTOE 7HI2? COMMANDER ENOTON HERE... WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO TALK TO THAT NATIVE?...RETURN TO THE BASE IMMED-IATELY.
BUT!
I SAID RETURN IMMED--IATELY!
HOW LUCKY THESE COUNTRY FOLK ARE! A HEALTHY LIFE... FAR AWAY FROM NOISE AND POLLUTION!...
FRESH, NATURAL FOOD! AH,! THEY DON'T EVER NEED TO GO ON A DIET!

HEOTTEMTTOE THIZ HERE...CALLING THE BASE... HEOTTEMTTOE THIZ
HELLO, BASE HERE, BASE HERE...I HEAR YOU, HEOTTEMTTOE...
HELLO? COMMANDER ENOTOV! I DON'T UNDERSTAND! WHY THIS SUDDEN RETURN?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, HEOTTEMTTOE?. YOU'RE NOT AWARE OF WHAT SORT OF THINGS YOU'VE BEEN TELLING THAT TERRESTRIAL!... ABOUT LETTUCE GROWING IN THE FOREST... MUSHROOMS IN A GARDEN...AND THE YOUNG AMANITES! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT MUSHROOMS ARE FATAL TO TERRESTRIALS?
BUT!
GOOD GRIEF! WHAT DID THEY TEACH YOU IN TRAINING?...ANYWAY, BECAUSE OF YOUR IDIOTIC CARRYINGS ON, HE'S BOUND TO BE SUSPICIOUS AND GIVE THE ALERT TO THE NEARBY TOWNS!
BUT, COMMANDER, I ASSURE YOU THERE'S NO RISK...I UNDERSTOOD THE SITUATION RIGHT AWAY. HE WAS A MONTREALER AND THOSE GUYS DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE COUNTRY! I'M SURE HE DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING!
MAYBE, HEOTTEMTTOE, BUT YOU CAN'T TAKE THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE. WE MUST BE ABLE TO LIVE IN THEIR MIDST WITHOUT AWAKENING THEIR SUSPICIONS SO WE CAN GRADUALLY OVERTAKE THE KEY POSTS IN THEIR GOVERNMENT!... UNDERSTAND?
YES, COMMANDER.
WHEN I THINK THAT HE MIGHT HAVE DRUNK UP MY RESERVOIR OF MOTOR FUEL!...
THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT... THE COUNTRY IS A WORLD APART.
FIN
ALEXIS

CHAIN MAIL

Dear *HM*,

I just finished reading my roommate's copy of this month's *HM*. I thought I'd let whoever wrote "Barbarella" know that a light year is a measurement of distance, not time....

Peter A. Smith
Hamilton, Bermuda

Dear Pete,

If you're so smart, how come you have to borrow your copies?—Eds.

Editors,

On the "Furthermore" page of April 1978, mention was made of the storyboards for the *Dune* film, drawn by Moebius. Do such exist? And if so, how may those of us isolated in America ever hope to see them? By the way, mere words are totally inadequate to describe my delight with each and every issue of *HM* (but I can't draw, so they'll have to do)....

Dennis Holstein
Houma, Louisiana

Dear D.,

At this very moment, minions of HM *post o'er land and ocean without rest, attempting to locate and, if possible, publish, those boards.—Eds.*

Dear Mr. Kelly,

You are responsible for an answer to a Chain Mail letter in *HM* issue April 1978. A Mr. Rex T. Shelby (I don't know, but it sounds like a fictitious name; T. Rex is the thunder lizard in the story "A Sound of Thunder," a Bradburyan metaphor for cruel dictatorship) made a very serious and interesting statement: "...My principal complaint is that your magazine is simply too European. The European experience is quite different..."

Your extremely stupid and infantile answer was: "...So true...how can we respect a people whose mothers let our fathers fuck them for Hershey bars after the war?"

One could think your answer is ironic. If so, it's the worst piece of irony my friends and I ever have read in our lives.

One of your so highly admired psychologists would tell you that you are suffering from unconscious feelings of *national hate* against your own country as well as against foreign countries!

Why do you think that some women—besides the professional hookers—let themselves fuck your fathers only for Hershey bars or other things to eat? It was because their babies were hungry or their kids were in danger of dying of malnutrition, and the only way to get something to eat was to be on the fucking track.

I wouldn't dare to call most of the American soldiers perverted and horny, bestial folks when they took the chance that was offered.

I'm a German and I was born after the wartime, but I can understand also those women or soldiers who fucked the devil out of their souls only to have some hours of human warmth, feelings, pleasure, and understanding. Many women had lost their old men; and their relatives and children were buried under the ruins also caused by your bombs. If I were one of your types I would say: "Kelly, Kelly, Kelly: your name...your name reminds me of terrible bloodshed in Vietnam, of the inhuman slaughtering of innocent women and children. It reminds me of George Armstrong Custer, of Colonel John Reynolds, of Wounded Knee, of Chicamauga, of the deaths of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, of Indian reservations and the moaning and dying of crying red buffaloes, and last but not least, of the American soldiers haunting Italian folks while playing Second World War.

I hope you will think about what I wrote and I hope you will never write such nonsense again. It would be nice to have an answer, but I think you haven't got a bit of that spirit some of your ancestors had while being a pioneer on the frontier.

Jochen Peuss
Berlin, West Germany

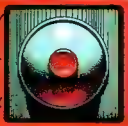
Dear Jochen:

Actually, the Hershey bar bit is a quote from that infamous war criminal, Lenny Bruce.—Eds.

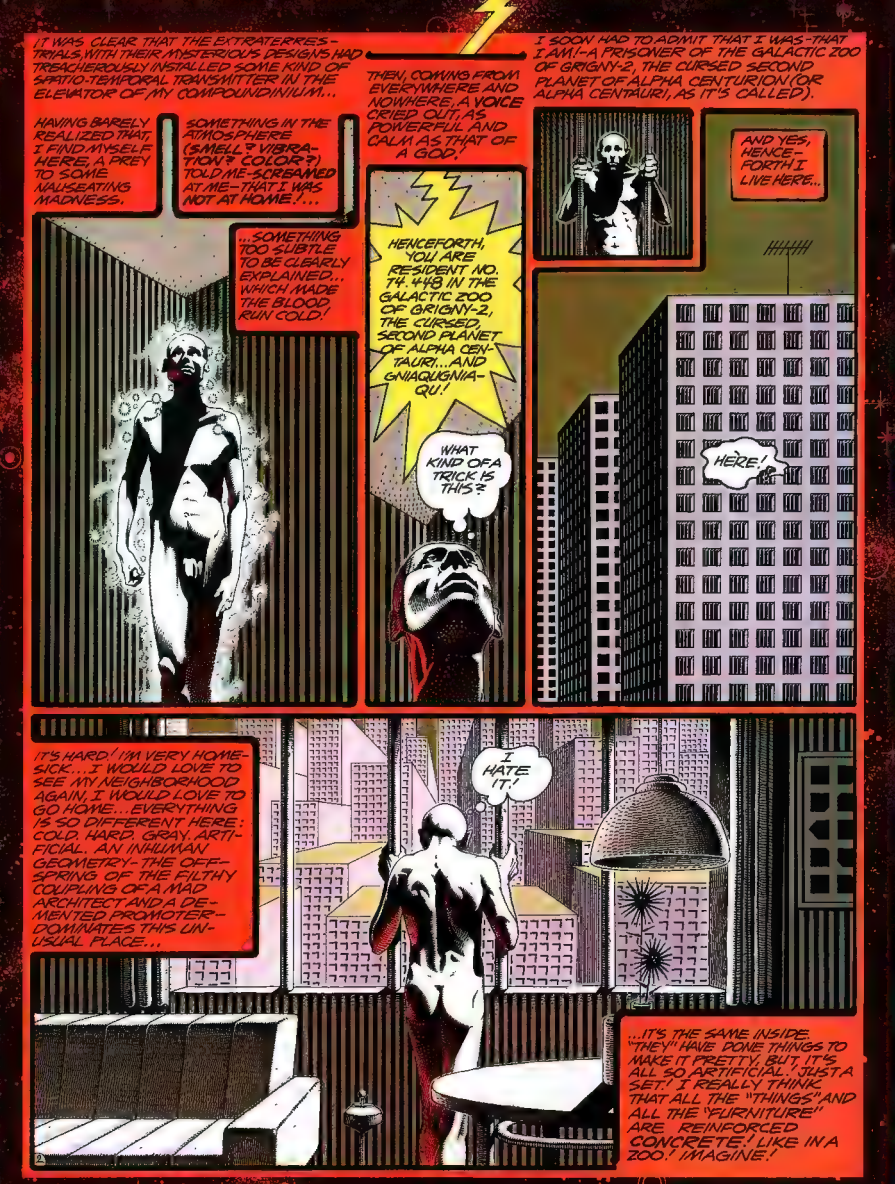
PLANET OF TERROR

NORMALLY, I NEVER TAKE THE ELEVATOR, BUT ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY, I DON'T KNOW WHY (SOME FATAL ABSENT MINDEDNESS!) I ENTERED THE ODD LITTLE BOX. WHAT AN INCREDIBLE DISCOVERY! THERE I WAS PRESENTED WITH A SHIMMERING TECHNOLOGY! 'SHINING METAL EVERYWHERE!' AND BUTTONS! LOTS OF BUTTONS!...

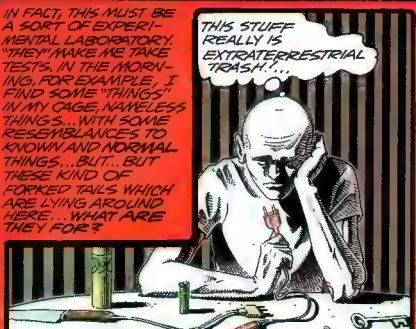
I WAS ABOUT TO PRESS THE BUTTON FOR MY FLOOR, THE SEVENTH, WHEN MY GLANCE (CHANCE OR PREDESTINATION?) FELL ON ANOTHER BUTTON. ALONE. APART. WITHOUT ANY NUMBER...



TEMPTATION! THE UNLIKELY, WHICH LIES IN WAIT FOR US AT EACH CORNER OF THE COMPOUNDINIUM, OPENED ITS DOORS TO ME ONCE AGAIN. DELIGHTFULLY MOVED BY THE BRAVERY OF MY GESTURE, I PRESSED IT! I WASN'T WRONG...


IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE EXTRATERRESTRIALS, WITH THEIR MYSTERIOUS DESIGNS, HAD TREACHEROUSLY INSTALLED SOME KIND OF SPATIO-TEMPORAL TRANSMITTER IN THE ELEVATOR OF MY COMPOUNDINIUM...
HAVING BARELY REALIZED THAT, I FIND MYSELF HERE, A PREY TO SOME NAUSEATING MADNESS.
SOMETHING IN THE ATMOSPHERE (SMELL? VIBRATION? COLOR?) TOLD ME-SCREAMED AT ME-THAT I WAS NOT AT HOME!...
...SOMETHING TOO SUBTLE TO BE CLEARLY EXPLAINED... WHICH MADE THE BLOOD RUN COLD!
THEN, COMING FROM EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE, A VOICE CRIED OUT, AS POWERFUL AND CALM AS THAT OF A GOD:
HENCEFORTH, YOU ARE RESIDENT NO. 74.448 IN THE GALACTIC ZOO OF GRIGNY-2, THE CURSED, SECOND PLANET OF ALPHA CENTAURI... AND GNIAQUGNIA-QU!
WHAT KIND OF A TRICK IS THIS?
I SOON HAD TO ADMIT THAT I WAS-THAT I AM!-A PRISONER OF THE GALACTIC ZOO OF GRIGNY-2, THE CURSED SECOND PLANET OF ALPHA CENTURION (OR ALPHA CENTAURI, AS IT'S CALLED).
AND YES, HENCE-FORTH I LIVE HERE...
HERE!
IT'S HARD! I'M VERY HOMESICK. I WOULD LOVE TO SEE MY NEIGHBORHOOD AGAIN. I WOULD LOVE TO GO HOME... EVERYTHING IS SO DIFFERENT HERE: COLD. HARD. GRAY. ARTIFICIAL. AN INHUMAN GEOMETRY-THE OFFSPRING OF THE FILTHY COUPLING OF A MAD ARCHITECT AND A DEMENTED PROMOTER-DOMINATES THIS UNUSUAL PLACE...
I HATE IT!
...IT'S THE SAME INSIDE "THEY" HAVE DONE THINGS TO MAKE IT PRETTY, BUT IT'S ALL SO ARTIFICIAL! JUST A SET! I REALLY THINK THAT ALL THE "THINGS" AND ALL THE "FURNITURE" ARE REINFORCED CONCRETE! LIKE IN A ZOO! I IMAGINE!

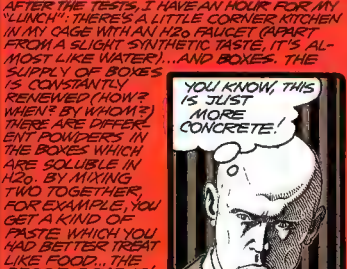
IN FACT, THIS MUST BE A SORT OF EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORY. "THEY" MAKE ME TAKE TESTS. IN THE MORNING, FOR EXAMPLE, I FIND SOME "THINGS" IN MY CAGE. NAMELESS THINGS... WITH SOME RESEMBLANCES TO KNOWN AND NORMAL THINGS... BUT... BUT THESE KIND OF FORKED TAILS WHICH ARE LYING AROUND HERE... WHAT ARE THEY FOR?



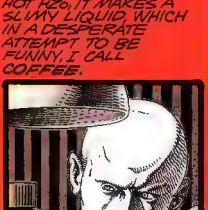
EVEN SO, THERE WAS ONE TEST I PASSED:

...BUT I DON'T LIKE PLAYING THIS GAME MUCH: THE NEIGHBORS ABOVE BECOME ENRAGED AND SPRAY ME WITH THE HUMIDOPODE. MY BLOOD CURDLES AT THE IDEA OF THE FILTHY ABOMINATIONS WITH WHOM I SHARE THIS PLACE...

AFTER THE TESTS, I HAVE AN HOUR FOR MY "LUNCH": THERE'S A LITTLE CORNER KITCHEN IN MY CAGE WITH AN H_2O FAUCET (APART FROM A SLIGHT SYNTHETIC TASTE, IT'S ALMOST LIKE WATER!)... AND BOXES. THE SUPPLY OF BOXES IS CONSTANTLY RENEWED (HOW? WHEN? BY WHOM?) THERE ARE DIFFERENT POWDERS IN THE BOXES WHICH ARE SOLUBLE IN H_2O. BY MIXING TWO TOGETHER, FOR EXAMPLE, YOU GET A KIND OF PASTE WHICH YOU HAD BETTER TREAT LIKE FOOD... THE PROOF: I EAT IT!

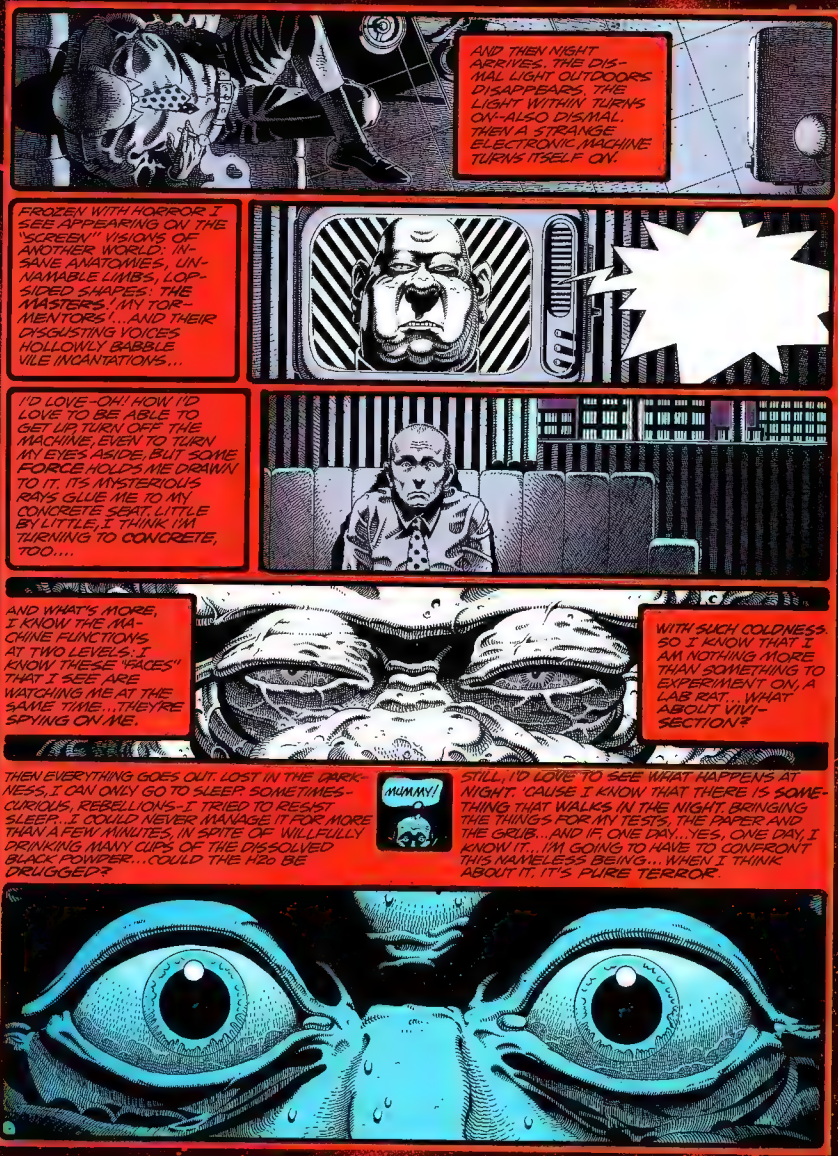


THERE'S ALSO A BLACK POWDER: DILUTED IN HOT H_2O, IT MAKES A SLIMY LIQUID, WHICH IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO BE FUNNY, I CALL COFFEE.



IN THE AFTERNOON, THERE ARE MORE EXERCISES - THESE ONES ARE MORE INTELLECTUAL. THEY MUST BE COMMUNICATION TESTS. I DON'T KNOW IF I ALWAYS PASS THEM, BUT I DO MY BEST... IT PASSES THE TIME... THERE'S A SUPPLY OF "PAPER," "CRAYONS," AND "PENS," WITH WORDS AND IMAGES, I TRY TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT MYSELF... ABOUT MY DREAMS... AND ABOUT THIS NIGHTMARE WORLD WHERE I AM CONDEMNED TO "LIVE"...

THEN, AS IF THROWING BOTTLES INTO THE SEA, I CAST MY LITTLE CARDS OUT THE WINDOW, TRUSTING THEM TO SPACIAL AIR CURRENTS, TO THE SOLAR WINDS, TO THE COSMIC SLIPSTREAM ...HOPING THAT SOMEONE SOMEWHERE WILL FIND THEM, READ THEM, AND DO SOMETHING...


AND THEN NIGHT ARRIVES. THE DISMAL LIGHT OUTDOORS DISAPPEARS, THE LIGHT WITHIN TURNS ON-ALSO DISMAL. THEN A STRANGE ELECTRONIC MACHINE TURNS ITSELF ON.
FROZEN WITH HORROR I SEE APPEARING ON THE "SCREEN" VISIONS OF ANOTHER WORLD: INSANE ANATOMIES, UNNAMABLE LIMBS, LOPSIDED SHAPES: THE MASTERS, MY TORMENTORS!, AND THEIR DISGUSTING VOICES HOLLOWLY BABBLE VILE INCANTATIONS...
I'D LOVE-OH! HOW I'D LOVE TO BE ABLE TO GET UP, TURN OFF THE MACHINE, EVEN TO TURN MY EYES ASIDE, BUT SOME FORCE HOLDS ME DRAWN TO IT. ITS MYSTERIOUS RAYS GLUE ME TO MY CONCRETE SEAT. LITTLE BY LITTLE, I THINK I'M TURNING TO CONCRETE, TOO....
AND WHAT'S MORE, I KNOW THE MACHINE FUNCTIONS AT TWO LEVELS: I KNOW THESE "FACES" THAT I SEE ARE WATCHING ME AT THE SAME TIME...THEY'RE SPYING ON ME.
WITH SUCH COLDNESS. SO I KNOW THAT I AM NOTHING MORE THAN SOMETHING TO EXPERIMENT ON, A LAB RAT... WHAT ABOUT VIVISECTION?
THEN EVERYTHING GOES OUT. LOST IN THE DARKNESS, I CAN ONLY GO TO SLEEP. SOMETIMES-CURIOUS, REBELLIONS-I TRIED TO RESIST SLEEP...I COULD NEVER MANAGE IT FOR MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES, IN SPITE OF WILLFULLY DRINKING MANY CUPS OF THE DISSOLVED BLACK POWDER...COULD THE H2O BE DRUGGED?
MUMMY!!
STILL, I'D LOVE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS AT NIGHT. 'CAUSE I KNOW THAT THERE IS SOMETHING THAT WALKS IN THE NIGHT, BRINGING THE THINGS FOR MY TESTS, THE PAPER AND THE GRUB...AND IF, ONE DAY...YES, ONE DAY, I KNOW IT...I'M GOING TO HAVE TO CONFRONT THIS NAMELESS BEING... WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S PURE TERROR.

AND SURE ENOUGH, THAT DAY, THAT DREADED DAY ARRIVED!... THE ULTIMATE TEST... FACE TO FACE WITH THE UNSPEAKABLE... THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER... WILL I BE STRONG ENOUGH TO DESCRIBE THESE MOMENTS OF TERROR?

ONE MORNING... THERE IT WAS! SOMETHING FROM ANOTHER WORLD! IN MY CAGE! WITH ME! MONSTROUS... INCOMPREHENSIBLE... TERRIBLE AND FASCINATING...

THE FIRST THING THAT STRUCK ME WAS THAT IT SEEMED ODIOUSLY HUMANOID, ALMOST HUMAN... ALMOST, AS...

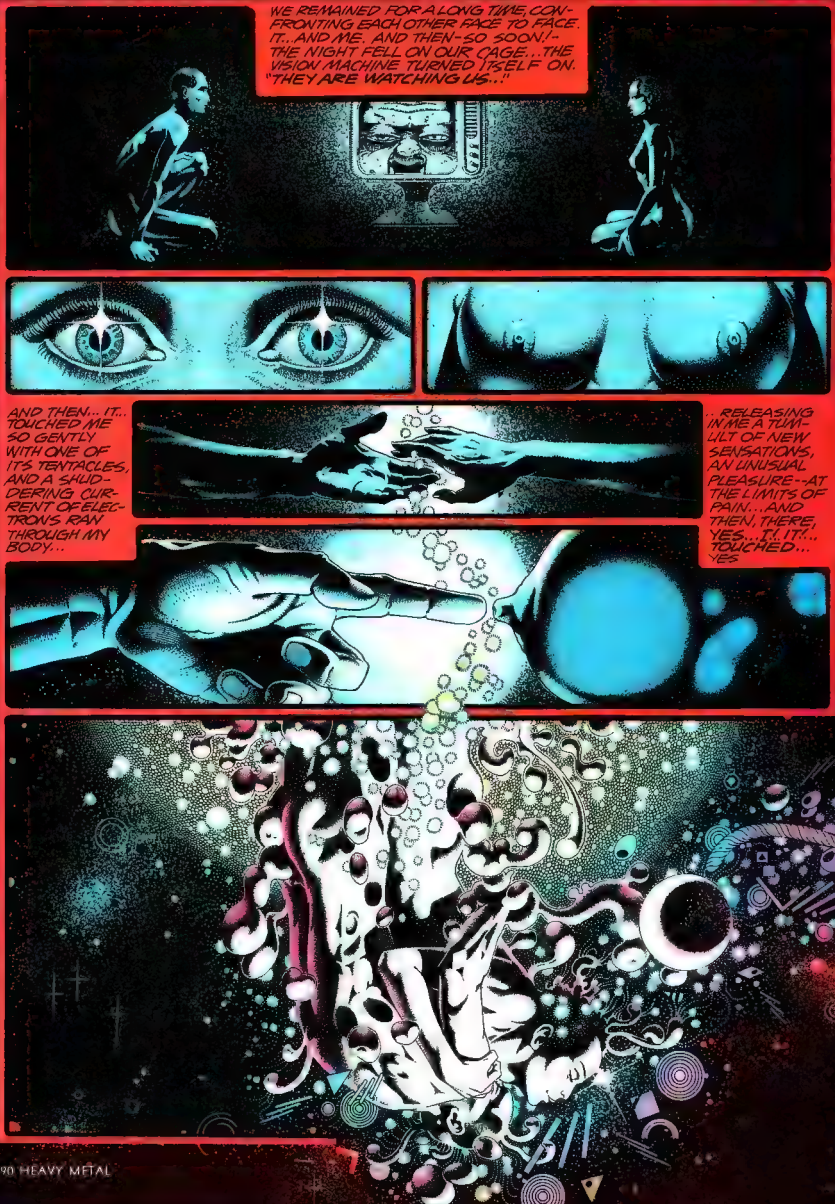
AS, THE SUPERFICIAL RESEMBLANCES ASIDE, THE DIFFERENCES - THE ABOMINABLE DIFFERENCES - HIT ME...

FIRST OF ALL, ITS VISUAL ORGANS (YES, IT HAD TWO!) REVEALING THE MYSTERIES OF THE COSMOS IN THEIR DEPTHS...

AND THEN ITS TOO SENSUAL MASTICATORY ORGAN... ITS SKIN TOO SMOOTH AND TOO WHITE...

ITS LIMBS (OR SHOULD I SAY "ITS PSEUDOPODS"?) TOO SUPPLE... AND PEDUNCLES STICKING OUT FROM ITS THORAX... AND BENEATH ITS STOMACH - OH, UNBEARABLE VISION! —

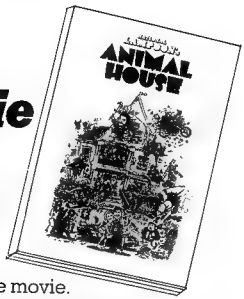
THERE WAS NOTHING THERE! ... NOTHING BUT A MYSTERIOUS FLEECE, CONCEALING SOME DARK SECRET... WHAT?... WHAT ORGANIC CHASM?...


WE REMAINED FOR A LONG TIME, CONFRONTING EACH OTHER FACE TO FACE. IT...AND ME. AND THEN--SO SOON!--THE NIGHT FELL ON OUR CAGE...THE VISION MACHINE TURNED ITSELF ON. "THEY ARE WATCHING US...!"
AND THEN... IT... TOUCHED ME SO GENTLY WITH ONE OF ITS TENTACLES, AND A SHUDDERING CURRENT OF ELECTRONS RAN THROUGH MY BODY...
...RELEASING IN ME A TUMULT OF NEW SENSATIONS, AN UNUSUAL PLEASURE--AT THE LIMITS OF PAIN...AND THEN, THERE, YES...IT, IT!... TOUCHED...
YES

...SURELY IT MUST BE THAT SOMEBODY IS RESPONDING TO ONE OF MY S.O.S.s...
...SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THAT THE TRANSMITTER ALSO FUNCTIONS AT TWO LEVELS...
SOMEONE WHO LEADS US...
...HOME!

SCRIPT BY PAUL LAMONTELLERIE AND CARA.

The book behind the movie behind the magazine...



First you read *Dr. Zhivago*...then you saw the movie.
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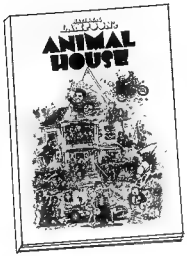

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AGE OF AGES

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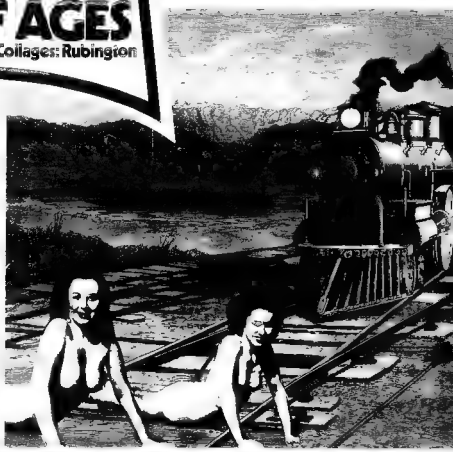
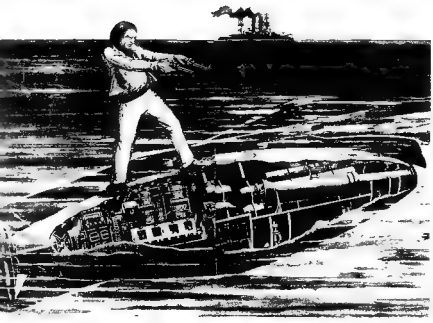
And now—the eeriest night in all of history—the night of the Double Moon!

Needless to say, the strange event had the doomsday prophets hopping at fever pitch. This was to be expected, but the side effects of more than one moon in the sky were unpredictable....



People in every walk of life were affected, and the nation was saddened by the loss of its most popular cinema lovers in an impulsive suicide pact....

Suicide was also the conclusion in the case of mutiny aboard a one-man submarine. There was evidence of mental instability on the part of the commander, which prompted a congressional investigation of the circumstances, for which no one had an explanation.



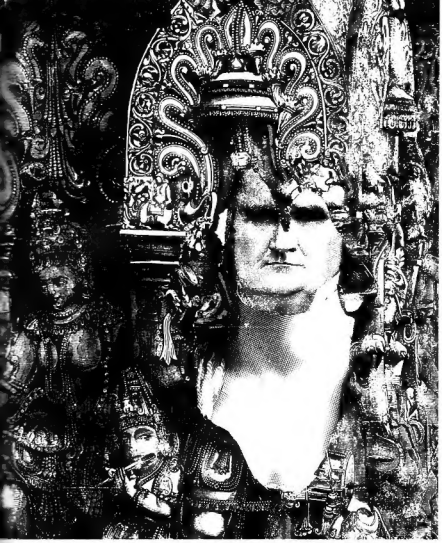
It ran to enormous waste and abuses amongst civil servants, such as dogcatchers ganging up on nonexistent hounds....

But the whole world was stunned when General Motors dropped out of the establishment. Clearly there was madness in the air.

There is a new look at the Pentagon, which, while it is top secret, disturbs many a general in its implications...superficially it appears as though the nostalgia craze has gone a bit too far.

Meanwhile...more and more Americans are trekking East, seeking out holy men with the secret of secrets...the meaning of life.

Returning to such places as Kalamazoo and other remote regions, they bring back the light of the East, and perhaps more obscure matter in their proto baggage....



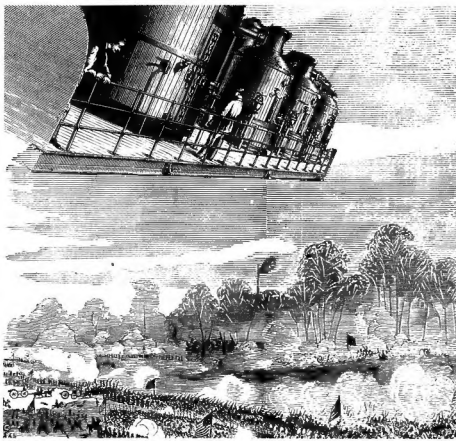
Sir Edwin has reason to suspect that a power-mad guru uses this religiosity as a screen for his own purposes...that many an innocent pilgrim is the unwitting tool of his hypnotic manipulations....

Which brings us to Sir Edwin's ongoing and ever more frustrating investigations. His international connections with PI** have mysteriously broken down. All his contacts are jammed with radio noises and snatches of soap opera....

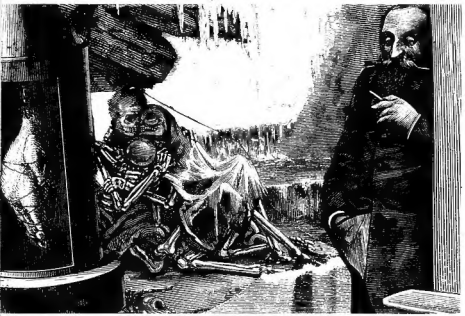
One of Sir Edwin's best operators gave every appearance of having lost her mind....

At first, he suspected she had been raped at their usual meeting place in the park, but her real trouble was far more obscure. A strange hysteria had her babbling incoherently about being madly in love....

She died blissfully from mysterious causes. Coroner's verdict: overdose of an unknown substance remarkably close to smegma....



Like many another, Sir Edwin has forgotten the space colony orbiting unseen over the turbulence rocking their lives....It has more connections with these events than one would suspect....



The space colony has on board more than its share of mad scientists, who have a notorious human destiny lab operating in gross violation of humanitarian laws.... Horrifying experiments are daily occurrences, part of a concerted drive of these sly Frankensteins to – what else – control the earth!

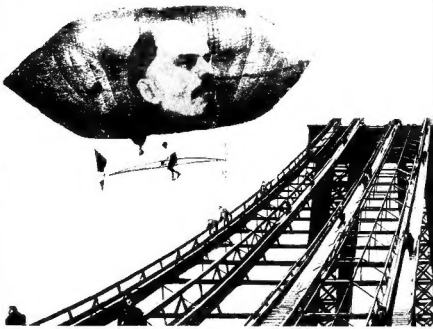
The big thing is drugs, and the search for something to beat out heroin has narrowed to an extraction from streetwalking animals. This heady substance, akin to smegma, cannot be grown or harvested, but is collected from the abundance on city streets, thence synthesized into an euphoria-producing drug of the first magnitude. (May also be baked.)

An aspiring tyrant uses the latest technology to unbalance and manipulate the minds of the meek....

Here a once tender subject is converted into a demoniac being....

The first overt act of aggression is...another first in this fantastic year...a hijacking from outer space....

Also a first for the Brooklyn Bridge, which has been sold and resold a million times but never yet held for ransom. Here we see the terrorist making off with $6,000,000 while workers comb the area for hidden bombs....



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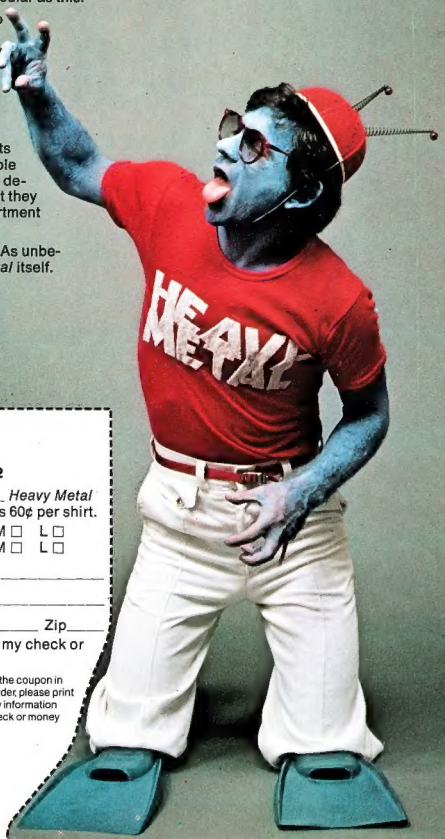

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